

## Chapter 1

*Lily glanced up from her baby boy sleeping in the bassinet beside her to the clock hanging above the mantle of the roaring fireplace. Not that the clock was any helpful to her if she wanted to know the time, no this clock was different. This clock contained three hands, each hand containing a photo of her small family, and instead of numbers the clock had different places where everybody could be, such as home, work, out with friends, and even mortal peril. Her medium hand, along with the newly added small one for her son, pointed to at home while her husbands was in between work and home. Lily smiled softly to herself, picked up the book that she was reading, and snuggled further down into the comfy couch. She had not gotten passed the first page when she fell asleep to join her infant son in the land of nod, nor did she notice that the flame inside her fireplace turned green and out of it shot her husband James, an exact replica of their son with a few exceptions of course. The first one was being size, obviously James Potter was bigger, and the second was the eyes, Harry had emerald green eyes like his mother, while James had big brown eyes. The rest of his traits were exactly the same.*

*James looked around smiling at his beautiful family. He started making his way to his wife, to let her know that he was home safe and sound, when he heard a soft cooing sound coming from the bassinet.*

*"Hiya, champ." James said picking his son up. " So, You're awake. Fooled me didn't you, and all this time I thought you were sleeping."*

*In response to his fathers greeting Harry started cooing more loudly, and then in a flash he grabbed one of James' thin fingers and clamped it tightly in his chubby little finger. Then within another quick moment Harry had the newly grabbed finger in his mouth. James assuming that Harry was just going to suck on it, was quite surprised when he felt teeth and gum chomp down hard on his finger.*

*"Why, You little." James said grimacing, and sucking on his sore finger.*

*“Score one, for lil Prongs.” A sleepy voice said from behind the chair giggling. “I wanted to warn you when you came home, but looks like I’m too late.” Lily said through another burst of laughter. “ He’s been doing that ALL DAY. His teething has gotten quite bad, but the worst of it is I think he actually knows what he’s doing, and trying to play us all for a fool. My guess is that he’s just trying to join in with the marauders, and start some chaos on his own.” With that said Lily eyed her son suspiciously.*

*Harry’s eyes met his mother, and as he locked eye contact with her, he gave her the most innocent smile he could muster on his tiny face.*

*That got both the adults in the room laughing, and eventually Harry joined in with his little coo’s.*

*James crossed the room with Harry, and put him to bed. He then made his way back into the den, to see his wife. Once he got there the smile that he was wearing quickly vanished from his face. Lily was looking daggers at him and he had no idea why. The worst part of it was that Lily’s eyes no longer danced and sparkled instead they were like a frozen pond, all clear, and cold.*

*“What?” James asked looking all confused*

*”Don’t you give me what, Mr. Potter.” Lily hissed.*

*“I honestly don’t understand, what’s wrong, what happened?”*

*“You’re what’s wrong. You promised me. You promised me you’d be home earlier, and you’d stop working so late. You specifically told me no more late hours. I was so worried, James, with everything going on, and You – Know – Who, getting stronger, what if he got to you, I don’t know what I would have done without you.” Tears were brimming in her eyes now.*

*“I’m sorry love, I didn’t mean to make you upset, it’s just that this raid took a bit longer then we suspected it would, I’ll try to do better next time, I promise.” In seeing that his feeble apology didn’t please his wife he continued, “ Hey don’t worry Lil’s no one has ever taken down a Potter, for we are a strong breed of people.” He tried feebly to laugh.*

*"That's not funny James, not funny at all. How can you even joke at a time like this?" Now tears were really running down her face in vast amounts.*

*"Aw, Lils, listen to me. Tomorrow everything will be finalized, and that great big Git of a man and his mates, will not be able to get his hands on or harm, You, Harry, or Myself, understand? The light will defeat the dark, like it has."*

*"What, if you're wrong James, and You – Know – Who triumphs, and then we live in darkness, what will happen not just to our little family, but to everyone else. I want this to be over with. I'm so scared all the time, what kind of place is this for our son." She was near hysterics at this time.*

*James did the only thing he knew how to do to calm his wife down. He opened his arms to her, for comfort, but she refused.*

*"If that's the way you're going to be fine then." James scowled, clearly upset by the rejection from Lily.*

*Before she knew what was happening, James pulled out his wand muttered the Incantation, "Accio, Lily." And found herself in her husbands arms.*

*"I love you." He whispered in her ear, and then he leaned down to give her a kiss on the tip of her nose.*

*"I love you too." She said through muffled sobs, and she snuggled deep within his warm embrace, and he kissed her once more.*

*James carried Lily off to bed, tucked her in, undressed himself from his work robes, slipped into his sleep robes, and then joined his son and wife in sleep.*

*The next afternoon, after her son had been sleeping for two hours, Lily went to check on him. She stopped suddenly when she noticed that someone was already there.*

*"James?" She looked puzzled and confused. He was supposed to be at work after all.*

*“James, talk to me, tell me what’s wrong?” She said now more urgently. Almost near hysterics again.*

*“I decided to come home early today, Minister Furtoch said it was imperative that his best auror have some time to recuperate, before tonight’s raid.”*

*“Oh!” was all Lily could muster, as comprehension dawned on her face. The rest of the plan to keep the Potter’s safe was ineffect.*

*Lily made her way into her son’s room picked up the sleeping child, and rocked with him on the rocking chair, back and forth, back and forth.*

*The sun was setting fast, about to mark the end of a new day. Lily knew what this night would bring, and could not tear herself away from her child, not even for a second. She had a feeling that it was going to happen tonight, even with all the extra-added securities. She held her baby harder and sang to him a song from her favourite children’s book by Robert Munsch when she was younger.*

*“ I’ll love you forever*

*I’ll like you for always*

*As long as I’m living*

*My baby you’ll be.”*

*Lily continued to sing, if only to engrave that song into young Harry’s head, in hopes that he would remember her, and know that she loved him with all her heart.*

*She looked up from her beautiful son for a quick nervous glance into the hallway. At that moment she saw James fly past the room, robes billowing in the air threateningly. He yelled to her from the steps, “Take Harry and run. I’ll try to stop him.”*

*At that she saw a green blaze of light, from the stairs and knew that running away was futile, she would lose against Voldemort.*

*He stepped into the room and smiled a snake like smile, his face twisted in malice as he looked up at the pathetic girl, and her brat, "And he's supposed to be my demise, HA." Voldemort thought to himself.*

*"Give me the child and you my dear shall live."*

*"Please not Harry, just take me instead." Lily cried trying to plead with the monster before her.*

*"I Do Not want you I want him." He snarled.*

*"Well, you can't have him. I won't let you, you're a despicable monster, I'd rather die." Lily screamed now in hysterics.*

*"Well young lady that can certainly be arranged. AVEDA KEDAVRA." He yelled, and for the second time that night Harry was bathed in a green glow, his mother lay limp on the floor dead.*

*"AVEDA KEDAVRA." Voldemort said again, but this time the spell rebounded on him, and he was thrown from his body evaporating in a mist, while young Harry Potter was now the first person to ever survive the killing curse.*

*Harry crawled toward his mother, speaking his first word. "Mama." And when Lily did not respond he nuzzled into his mother's stomach and fell asleep crying amidst the rubble.*

The now 17 year old Harry Potter, woke up to hear himself screaming "Mama." He hoped that his uncle Vernon did not hear him otherwise he knew he'd be in trouble.

This was the fourth time this week, he found himself waking up to his screaming each dream had been different though, and each time his uncle would come to his room and beat him with a belt, then refuse to feed him the next day.

After several minutes passed Harry figured he was safe, all he could hear was silence; he was ready to fall back asleep when all that changed.

**“HARRY POTTER!”** Thundered Vernon Dursley right outside his door. And this time Harry knew he was in real trouble.

## Chapter 2

Vernon Dursley had enough. This was the fourth time that that “Freak” had woken him up during the middle of the night and he had enough. He was furious by the time he made it down the hall to his nephew’s bedroom. He slammed the door open with a loud **THUD**, and went straight up to the boy.

Harry knew he was in more trouble than he had ever been in his life when his uncle came into the room, the expression on his face was not out of anger at being woken up at an ungodly hour, but it was one of pure hatred. He knew that no amount of sorry’s would stop his uncle from doing what he was going to do.

“I’ve had it with you boy. “ and with that Vernon sat on Harry’s stomach so the boy would not be able to move, then with his big beefy hands he swiped it right across Harry’s face.

Harry, however, knew not to flinch or cry out, it was better just to let his Uncle Vernon do what he wanted to do, and that way it would be over sooner.

“I have a very important meeting boy, and I needed my sleep. YOU(Slap). DISTURBED (slap). MY(slap). SLEEP(slap). What do you have to say for yourself boy?”

Harry had never seen his Uncle this way, and he himself was getting very frightened. He did the only thing he could think of, to get his uncle to calm down.

“I’m sorry Uncle Vernon. I didn’t mean to.”

“You didn’t mean to.”

“I was asleep, I couldn’t help it. I’ll be good tomorrow. I promise.”

“Promises made by you **FREAKS** mean **NOTHING!**” Vernon was yelling, at this point, and spittle was flying everywhere.

Harry knew he had to try a different tactic, because his uncle seemed to be enjoying this way too much.

“Ahh, Uncle Vernon. Not to be rude or disrespectful but tomorrow is day three of when I’m to write to my friends and those people (he knew not to say wizards in front of his uncle, that would have gotten him even angrier) they’ll be expecting a letter, and me telling them that I’m all black and blue because you hit me once too many, won’t go off with them too well.”

“So now you’re threatening me boy. Do you think I really took those **FREAKS** seriously? You are stupider than I thought you were. I know for a fact that you can’t leave this house, YOU need to come back here, isn’t that right?” He hissed at Harry. “Otherwise it would be sad to say that you would be one dead man. And those people would not jeopardize your protection, that I know for sure.”

At the thought of Harry being a dead man, Vernon smiled from ear to ear, sending shivers down Harry’s back.

Harry too bewildered to say anything just sat silently still, stunned, waiting to see what would happen next.

What did occur was something that he was not expecting. Harry felt relief as the large bear sized man had gotten off of him, for one quick shred of hope, he thought he was free, but in the next instant Vernon had grabbed Harry by the scruff of his neck, and dragged him down the hall towards the staircase.

“Let’s see you dare threaten me ever again.” Vernon said sadistically. And with that he dropped the already too thin boy down the stairs.

Harry felt his body flying through the air. He was paralyzed with fright, and that made him unable to scream. The last thing Harry could remember before he blanked out was a loud CRACK as his head made contact with the floor tiles.

Harry finally came round to consciousness around midday, his head throbbing as if someone had taken a hammer to it and was pounding away for hours at a time.



At first he couldn't remember why his head hurt that much, and then it dawned on him, his uncle had pushed him down the stairs.

"Well that's a new one." Harry had to admit.

Harry opened up his eyes groggily, the monstrous headache, which he had, was forcing him to keep his eyes closed, but eventually he was able to keep them opened.

He looked around his surroundings and groaned. He knew his uncle wouldn't allow him back in Dudley's second bedroom, at least not for the time being, but he never thought he'd be back where he was, the cupboard under the stairs.

He never liked the cupboard; in fact he always despised it. The cupboard always felt like the walls were closing in on him, due to the cramped space and the darkness that engulfed him.

The darkness was the worst part of it, because it blinded him from seeing anything. It was home to many bugs and insects, and they were always crawling around inside.

For some reason the bugs and insects were attracted to Harry, and Harry alone. When he used to inhabit the cupboard every morning Harry would wake to find at least ten of them clinging to his hair.

Harry shuddered in disgust at the many different dead bugs he could be lying on right now, and how many were in his hair. The cupboard hadn't been cleaned for five years, not since Harry moved out, and took residence in Dudley's second bedroom.

"This is what it must've been like for Sirius in Azkaban." Harry thought to himself glumly.

Upon realizing that he just thought about Sirius, dampened any little bit of happiness he may have had within him. All summer Harry tried to push Sirius to the back of his mind, but it always never worked.

Harry missed Sirius soo much, it was like losing his family all over again, and the vision from last night, did not help him any.

“Sirius.” Harry moaned out loud, but stopped when he realized that his uncle might hear him again, and didn’t feel like dealing with the repercussions, his uncle may give him.

Harry’s butt was getting sore and numb from sitting too long, he just wanted to stand and stretch, obviously he had enough common sense to know that the door would be locked, and he would not be able to get out.

He tried to get up from the bed, but it seemed his arms couldn’t move.

Harry was quite surprised that he didn’t realize any sooner why not. Apparently his uncle had taken the liberty of tying Harry’s hands behind the bed.

“It’s not like I could even go anywhere, he’s got the door bolted shut so tight that not even a storm of Death Eaters could get passed this.” Harry said to himself bitterly.

“Great, just great” Harry thought to himself. “Now how am I going to get out of this? If only I had my wand.” He laughed, because even if he did have his wand it was not like he could use it since he was not yet of age.

“I wonder what the wizarding world would say if they saw the “Boy Who Lived” like this.” He laughed at the expressions he imagined the people would have.

Thoughts like these, as well as one’s of Sirius and his parents continued to pass through Harry’s head. He didn’t know what time it was, or even how late.

Time seemed to be passing slowly, and every minute Harry was alone with his thoughts, he would get more and more aggravated.

He thought of all his belongings packed away, probably in the garage, he was not sure. At least if he had his textbooks and his hands free he would be able to do some homework. That would ease some of the tension that he was feeling.

“Stupid Git.” Harry seethed cursing his uncle.

It was his uncle's fault that he didn't have any of his stuff. The minute that they arrived home from Kings Cross Station, Vernon had thrown Harry into his room, and he took all of Harry's belongings, and put it in the garage. The only thing that Harry was able to save was the photo album, the one that Hagrid gave him in his first year.

The ropes were starting to burn his wrists, and the only solution that he could think of was to try and wriggle his hands free, if his uncle didn't tighten the ropes that hard, his hands could slip through, allowing him some freedom in the cupboard.

So Harry deciding that this was probably the only solution tried wriggling his hands free, but all that effort just left him feeling tired. The ropes ended up burning him more, and cutting into his thin flesh. Harry felt droplets of blood run down his hands. After struggling for several minutes he knew he lost this war.

"Maybe Aunt Petunia will help me." He thought desperately. Harry had to laugh at this one. His Aunt Petunia wouldn't help him even if he were hit by a speeding car. She would probably be yelling at the guy because he wasn't able to finish the job.

All Harry knew was that someone had to come soon because he really needed to use the loo, and would go in his pants if no one came for him.

With his head spinning from dizziness, his stomach rumbling from hunger, his hands bleeding from the ropes, all combined together finally took its toll on him, and he heaved up the last meal that he had eaten, the Hogwarts end of the year banquet.

Harry was going to relieve himself, figuring that nobody was going to come for him, and he desperately needed to go.

He was already to, when he saw the door swing open.

"Surprise!" shouted Vernon from outside the cramped space. "I thought that staying home today would be worth it then going to work. I've rescheduled my meeting, to spend the day with you." He said this in a very sweet sickly voice.

Harry found he couldn't find his voice. He felt himself starting to shake, but was able to stop the shaking before it turned noticeable. Harry decided last night before he was flung down the stairs that he wouldn't show any kind of weakness in front of his uncle, no matter what punishment was dealt to him.

"Well aren't you going to say anything boy. Why don't you get up then?"

"I'm a little bit tied up right at the moment." Harry said trying to make the situation a little bit lighter.

"Don't be smart with me boy." Growled Vernon.

Vernon made his way across the room and punched Harry right in his stomach.

Harry just slouched further into the bed, the wind knocked right out of him.

"So, you've been busy this morning, I see? And I thought you were just tired. But dear me, what is this? Wouldn't be blood? Would it? Trying to escape, eh Potter? Going to run tell the FREAKS? Let me tell you something boy, you will never ever go back to that freak school of yours, never!" Vernon sounded amused almost like he was playing with Harry. "I'll be back, don't you dare move a muscle, or else."

Vernon stalked out of the room, and within seconds was back, carrying a bat.

"I'll show you, you ungrateful brat, trying to run away, after everything that I have done for you, maybe some real pain will knock some sense into you."

"Aunt Petunia won't let you." Harry said his voice wavering.

"Oh didn't I tell you?"

"Tell me what?" Harry looked at him confused.

I sent both Petunia and Dudley on a visit to Marge's this morning; they won't be back for the rest of the month. YOU. ARE. ALL. MINE." He laughed like a little schoolgirl.

Vernon sat on Harry once more, pinning his legs down, in case the boy decided he was going to fight back. He untied one of Harry's arms from the bed, and placed his hand neatly on top of a thick hard covered book.

Harry had a feeling where this was going, and tried to squirm free, but when he did he felt the bat go into his stomach once more.

"You do that one more time boy, it'll be your head next."

Very swiftly Vernon held the bat high in the air, and brought it down hard on Harry's fingers, crushing them, but when they didn't break the first time, he continued until he heard the last of the five snaps as each finger broke.

Harry cried out in pain, stars were dancing across his face. He wished his uncle would hurry up. The throbbing in his fingers were excruciating, and he didn't know how much longer he could take.

"Please Uncle Vernon no more, I can't take it. I said I was sorry for last night, and I'm sorry for what I've done today just no more." Harry pleaded and cried at the same time.

**"I'LL SAY WHEN IT IS ENOUGH BOY, DO YOU HEAR ME BOY?"** Vernon yelled at Harry.

"Y...Ye..Yes ssssiirr." Harry slurred.

"Good boy, I think I'm training you well." Vernon laughed again.

Harry's hand was turning purple from the broken bones in his fingers; he wished that he could make the bones in his hands go away, like Lockhart had done when he was in his second year at Hogwarts.

Before Harry had time to ponder anymore, he felt his uncle press something into his battered hand. He looked down and realized it was

a quill, there was also parchment lying on the heavy book, and an ink well.

“Write, now.” Vernon snarled.

“I. Can’t. Uncle. Vernon. My. Fingers. They’re. All. broken.” He cried in between sobs.

“You will write boy, or otherwise it will be your other hand next.”

Harry curled his broken fingers around the quill and wrote his first letter to Hermione.

Dear Hermione,

Hope you’re summers going well. I’m good just got home from a day of shopping, but I’ve had time to look for the spells that you wanted me to, there are only four that will help when facing a death eater, they are: Hestatio (that causes major burns on people’s arms and legs), Enervate, Lumos, Priori incantantum. See you in September

Harry.

Writing this letter took ten minutes, due to the pain that Harry was feeling.

Every now and then Harry would scream out, caused by his splintered fingers.

Vernon looked on in amusement clearly enjoying his nephew’s suffering.

Harry finished his letter to Hermione, placed it in an envelope (after a quick look over by his uncle in case there was anything suspicious in there), and put it aside. With a pleading look in his eyes he faced his uncle.

“Uncle Vernon I can’t write anymore, do you think I can write the others tomorrow. Just so my hand can rest.”

"I don't think so boy, those freaks said they wanted the letter every three days, and today is the third day I want them done today. I'm not an idiot Potter, and DO NOT ever take me for one. Now write."

Harry finished all three letters, one to Tonks, Mad – Eye Moody, and Remus Lupin. These letters were much shorter than the one he wrote to Hermione.

"When will your owl be back?" Vernon questioned Harry once he was done all three letters.

"It's usually whenever she feels like it." Harry marvelled at this odd question.

"I want her back tonight no later than 7:00 p.m. got it boy."

"Yes sir."

He tied the approved letters to Hedwig's leg and gave her the message. She seemed to understand, because she nipped his hand as if to say "OK."

As Harry watched Hedwig take off he prayed that Hermione would see his small hint that he gave her in her letter, due to the fact that she was the brightest which of their age.

His hand hurt more then he could ever imagine, since he was forced to write those letters, and he passed out just as he heard his uncle leave the room and lock the door from behind him.

This time when Harry came to, he felt warmth spread over his throbbing body. He opened his eyes, and looked around him. He was not in the cupboard under the stairs anymore; he was in the Dursley's living room. He noticed that his one good hand was tied to the desk leg, and his bad hand lay listless beside him, still throbbing madly from its ordeal. Harry had no desire to move it whatsoever. To him it was fine where it was.

The warmth that he felt before was making him feel tired. He looked into the gentle fire that was lit in the fireplace.

"This is nice of him, at least." Harry thought, giving his uncle more credit than he deserved.

Harry had been lost in his thoughts when his Uncle Vernon, came trudging into the room, all of Harry's Hogwarts stuff in his hand.

He walked over to the fireplace, and set the stuff gently by the fire.

In that instant Harry knew what his uncle was planning to do. "NO." he cried. "Please don't do this."

"Oh but I shall have so much fun. You fouled up my things with your blood and vomit, I shall take the pleasure of doing the same to yours."

He picked up one of the textbooks of Harry's first year. He opened it and tore the first page out, crumpled it into a ball, and threw it into the fire. He did that repeatedly with each and every book that Harry owned, until there was none left.

Harry couldn't believe it, all of his books gone, not that he would have really cared if they got lost, because they were easily replaceable, but it was the mere principle of it. His own uncle was destroying the only things that Harry could actually call his own.

Vernon then moved on to Harry's robes, his broomstick servicing kit, the foe glass, and on and on it went down the list of all of Harry's belongings, until he came down to the last two items, Harry's firebolt and his wand.

Vernon picked up the firebolt with his overly large sized hands, and twig-by-twig tore it apart in front of his nephew, he watched Harry's face as he gleefully put all the broken twigs in the fireplace.

"My Godfather gave me that. LEAVE IT ALONE." Harry screamed

"You mean the convict, the one that you were always going on about, the same one you scream to during the night. Oh I hear you boy."  
"Sirrrriiuuus, Noooo, cooome baaaackkk, I'm sooorrry." He said mockingly.



“SHUDDUP! JUST SHUDDUP!” Harry was trembling now, furious. Furious at himself for being a wizard and not being able to do anything, but he was most furious at himself for giving his uncle power over him, when he couldn’t help it.

“I should’ve sent you away when you first arrived at my house. Now don’t you dare to tell me to shut up.” And he backhanded Harry across the face once more.

“Please, I’ll do extra chores, just don’t. That is all that I have left of him.” Harry hated to admit his next choice of words to his uncle, but he hoped that it would soften up his heart. “He died, two weeks before I came home, I don’t have anything else of his.” Harry’s once sparkling emerald green eyes were now replaced by a grey hue. There was no life in those eyes anymore, they were just empty and they contained a look of a person who was beaten in life a long time ago. “On second thought, I don’t care anymore, just do what you want.” Harry said defeated, tears were now streaming down his face.

“My birthday came early this year.” Vernon said maliciously, and he went back to stripping the firebolt, that helped to keep the flames afire.

The wand came next, and in a single snap it was broken in two. The phoenix strand poked out of the smaller half of the wand, sparkled for two seconds, and then the magic extinguished, gone forever like everything and everyone that Harry had loved.

With the fire gone, and all of Harry’s valuables destroyed, Vernon was untying Harry to lock him in the cupboard again. Just at that moment Hedwig came flying out of the fireplace right on time, 7:00 on the dot.

“Finally.” Vernon growled. Harry made as if to grab Hedwig with his bad hand, but Vernon grabbed his hand and roughly threw it back on the floor, knocking it into the desk. Harry howled in pain.

Instead Vernon grabbed the owl with both of his beefy hands, and with them he twisted Hedwig’s neck around snapping it in two, just like he did with Harry’s wand.

His beautiful snow owl, his trusted companion, now lay dead in his uncle's hands.

"NN!" Harry yelled again. "HEDWIG." Harry slumped into the desk knocking him into unconsciousness once more.

Vernon took the boy and locked him in the cupboard noticing before he left, the stench of urine that surrounded him.

Harry had finally wet himself, while unconscious just as Vernon put him down on the bed.

“Serves him right.” Vernon said to no one in particular.

Vernon smiled to himself, and started humming a song as he picked up the remains of his nephew's owl. He threw it away in the backyard garbage bin.

Vernon went back inside his normal home, extremely happy with his day's achievement. He sat himself on the couch watching the evening news, to see what freaks were destroying innocent lives that night.

## Chapter 3

Well here's the next chap, enjoy.

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"Ron, no more." Hermione giggled.

"Just once, and then I'll never ask you again. At least not for a week." Ron said playfully.

"No, Ron I can't take anymore. Maybe tomorrow."

"Fine." Ron said grumpily.

Hermione had only been at the Burrow for three days, and already her and Ron's relationship were developing much faster than both of them could expect. It was easier because they were usually left alone, until meal times, except for the odd times when Ginny would intrude out of boredom.

From outside of Ron's room, a springing noise could be heard as if someone was getting off of his bed.

Ginny who had been listening to this conversation outside of the closed door, opened it in disgust, eyes closed.

"Mum says dinner's ready."

"Ginny, why are your eyes closed?" Ron asked confused.

"Just didn't want to see anything."

"See what?" now it was Hermione's turn to look confused.

Ginny opened her eyes and to her surprise found Ron's wizard chess set sprawled out along the bed. The broken pieces were placed along the sides of the board.

"Oh!" Ginny exclaimed. "Well, anyways..."

"We know Ginny, dinner's ready." Ron explained impatiently. "Now if you don't mind get out."

Just at that moment Hedwig had flown into Ron's room, landed on the bed, dropped Harry's letter, and flew off out the window again.

"That's weird." Hermione exclaimed. "Hedwig never leaves that quickly."

"What about my letter, I'm also his best friend, why you and not me." Ron whined as he surveyed Hermione's letter, in jealousy.

Hermione started tearing open the envelope, that had Ron's address printed in neat scrawl.

"Ron, stop acting like a three year old." Ginny said sitting down on the bed joining the pair.

She was also curious as to what Harry had to say. After last year and the guys that she went out with, made her change her mind about Harry. Her crush was back in full swing. Ginny blushed just at the thought of Harry. This year she vowed to let him know.

While Ginny was lost in her thoughts Hermione scanned her letter from Harry and dropped it in surprise. "Ron, read the last sentence Harry wrote."

The sound of Hermione's worried voice brought Ginny back to the real world, and she just sat and listened for whatever would happen next.

"Yea so?" Ron gave Hermione a puzzled look.

"You know you could be so dense at times." Hermione admonished him.

"Mione what's wrong?"

"Harry's in trouble Ronald, that's what's wrong. He's written us, well me, actually, in code, asking for help."

"Did he say what's wrong? Could be his scar." Ron said hopefully.

"It's more than that, if it was just his scar he would have simply written it down, instead of having to hide his problem. He was probably being watched by his uncle, or possibly a death eater when he wrote this." Hermione started to chew her bottom lip nervously.

"We've got to go help him." Determined to help his friend Ron jumped off the bed ready to sprint out the door.

Hermione grabbed Ron by the arm, to stop him from doing anything stupid like she knew he was going to.

"How do you plan to get to Surrey, by broom?" She asked him sardonically.

"Fred and George." Ron stated simply.

"Are you mad? Yes, yes you are." She answered her own question.

"And why not? We did it in second year."

"Yes and look how much trouble you three got into then. I even heard someone saying, that you're mum even threatened to put bars on your window Ronald Weasley."

"That was all a misunderstanding, and whoever told you that, will be sorry in the morning." Ron glared at his sister.

Ginny hadn't heard the rest of the argument, by this time she had started to pale. She couldn't take anymore; their bickering was driving her insane. She knew if she didn't stop it now, then they would be at it all night. And in the end it would be pointless.

"Quiet the both of you, arguing back and forth isn't going to help Harry." Ginny piped up.

Ron and Hermione looked at Ginny in surprise.

"I agree with Ron." She told them flatly.

“Great you both have gone mad.” Hermione cried. “WE NEED TO TELL SOMEONE.” She seethed, as she jumped off the bed and looked out the window, backs turned to the two siblings.

“No, listen Hermione, for being the brightest witch of your age, your not doing a good job of it now. We can’t tell anyone. Anyone we tell will probably think that Harry is exaggerating. That’s probably what he thought to, because it seems like you’re the only one he wrote this to.”

“How do you know that?” Hermione faced back to the younger girl, clearly trying to stay calm at the insult that was just handed to her.

“Hermione let me finish, don’t interrupt me, please.” Ginny’s face was turning the same colour as her flaming red hair.

“Sorry.” Hermione mumbled, face going red, clearly embarrassed by being yelled at by someone younger than her.

“First off, he probably only told you because if he had told one of the order members he wouldn’t have asked you for the help. Now would he? Not when he’s asked overage wizards, who’s clearly more capable of helping him than you are. Secondly, Harry has written soo many times about his scar and how it hurts, that the adults won’t take him seriously, and they’d just end up telling us that he has to stay at his aunt’s and uncle’s for the blood protection to work, and in the end they’d tell us not to worry, and mind our own business.”

“So what are we going to do?” Hermione for once was lost, and she looked at the younger girl for help.

“I still say Ron’s right in this matter. Fred and George will be able to help us. They are the only overage wizards we can trust right now. I say we go to Diagon Alley tomorrow. They have invisibility cloaks and everything that we would need to help Harry.”

“Yes, but that still doesn’t explain how we’re still going to get to Surrey.” Hermione wailed.

Ginny glanced at Ron; it looked to Hermione like they were using telepathy to read each other’s mind.

Ginny nodded her head. "That is bloody brilliant, who knew you had it in you." A deeper appreciation for her older brother shone across her face.

"What?" Hermione said clearly even more confused, and on the verge of tears thinking of Harry, and what was happening to him at this moment.

"Don't you remember, the spell Mad – Eye, did on Harry, to take him to Grimmauld place last summer."

"The disillusionment charm." Hermione's eyes grew wide. She slowly pondered this idea. "That is bloody brilliant. We can't do it, but Fred and George will be able to. You're a genius Ron." And she gave a soft squeal and enveloped the blushing boy in her arms

"I'm hungry." Ron said breaking free of the bear tight hug Hermione had him in. To prove his point his stomach gave an enormous rumble. They all laughed at this.

"Ron, you're always hungry." Exclaimed the two girls, through their laughter.

Feeling better now that they had a plan, Ron descended down the stairs to the kitchen, with the two girls following behind.

---

The dinner at the Weasley's that evening was a quite affair. It consisted of Ron, Ginny, Hermione, and Mrs. Weasley. Mr. Weasley was doing some extra work for the order, and the twin's appearance was far from few, since they opened up their joke shop, they were extremely busy.

They all sat quietly around the table, not one had anything to say, all three teenagers lost in their own thoughts, thoughts about Harry, and the rescue plan.

Molly Weasley looked curiously around the table. She was not used to this from any of them. Meal times at the Burrow were usually boisterous. Molly knew these children were not acting normally. She had to know what was happening.

“All right you three, what’s going on?” Molly asked them suspiciously.

“What do you mean, mum?” Ginny picked up another drumstick and began chewing on it innocently.

“Your behaviours tonight, that’s what I mean.”

“OOH, that.” Ginny said, putting down the bone, waving her mum’s comment aside “I guess we’re just thinking about tomorrow.”

Ron now gave his sister a look of daggers, he was ready to tell her off, but before he could Ginny slightly cocked her head to one side, telling him to back off. This went unnoticed by Mrs. Weasley since she was clearing the table getting it ready for dessert.

“What’s happening tomorrow?” She cast her child a wary glance, almost in an accusatory way.

“We’ve decided to head off to Diagon Alley to visit Fred and George. I just can’t wait to see what new jokes they’ve invented, it’s almost three months since I’ve last seen them.”

The other two teens let out deep silent breaths by Ginny’s save.

“If you three are going maybe I’ll join you, there are things that I need to get, and I haven’t seen Fred and George in awhile either.”

Ron and Hermione held their breaths for a second time that night in less than five minutes, if Mrs. Weasley went with them then there would be no hope of helping Harry that day. And they had to help him because none of them knew what kind of trouble he was actually in.

Ginny came to the rescue, “MOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMM.” She cried in the whiniest voice that she could muster. “We don’t need an escort. We can go by ourselves. We ARE NOT BABIES ANYMORE!”

Mrs. Weasley cringed; listening to her daughter’s whining was like listening to fingernails scraping against a blackboard.



“Fine. Just stop your whining. And you must promise me one thing, that you won’t go wandering off without Fred or George. It’s very dangerous these days, since Voldemort’s return.”

“We promise.” All three said in unison.

Though Fred and George were famous for being pranksters, they could also be very malicious and overprotective of their younger siblings. They inherited that from Mrs. Weasley’s side of the family. Mrs. Weasley felt content knowing that the twins would keep them safe.

They ate dessert, and trudged up the stairs sleepily. It was only 9:30, but they had no idea what the next day would bring them, and they wanted to be well rested.

They climbed into their respective beds, Ron and Ginny falling asleep as soon as their heads hit the pillows.

Hermione, the last one to fall asleep, said a silent prayer to keep them safe, and for Harry to be ok. She soon fell into a deep sleep.

---

The stray rooster woke the slumbering teens from their sleep. They opened their eyes, to see the welcoming of the rising sun’s rays. They didn’t take long to enjoy the view, coming from the window. Today was an important day, and they had no time to daydream.

They got up, showered, dressed, and quickly ate breakfast.

Within two hours they found themselves staring into the flames of the fireplace, ready to be taken to Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes.

“Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes.” Ginny talked very clearly and threw the floo powder into the fire. Instantly the fire turned a light shade of green. She stepped into the fire gingerly, and was swept away.

Next was Hermione’s turn, and soon she too found herself drifting down the fireplace.

“Omphf.” She squealed as she hit the ground.

“So sorry Hermione, we were going to put down carpet, but you came tumbling in a second too early.” Quipped Fred who standing behind Ginny.

“Very funny.” She smirked.

“Where’s little ickle Ronniekins. I thought he was right behind you.”

That was George.

“He was. I hope nothing happened to him.” Her smile fading and worry lines were beginning to etch across her forehead.

“Don’t worry you’re boyfriend will be fine. You’ll be in each other’s arms soon enough. Don’t you worry your little pretty bushy hair off.”

“Fred.” Ginny admonished. “Now’s not the time.”

Having just been scolded by his younger sister made Fred blush a deep dark red.

”Thanks.” Hermione said gratefully, also blushing rather fiercely.

In that second another person came stumbling out of the fireplace, falling flat on his face.

Ginny just shook her head and giggled. “Well, speak of the devil.”

“What?” Ron asked in bewilderment, as he pulled himself off from the floor, and started brushing the soot off his robe.

“What took you so long?” Hermione scolded.

“Aww, did little Ronniekins get lost in the grates.”

“Shut up, Fred.” Ron glared.

“Yea leave him alone, the little baby’s sensitive, don’t you know.”

“Shut up, George.” Hermione repeated Ron.

“Shut up all of you.” Ginny snapped at them. “We have more important things here to deal with. And for once you two,” She said pointing at the twins. “Have to stop acting so childish. For once in your lives try to act mature.” Ginny chided them.

Eight eyes were staring at Ginny now. Mouths opened agape. Never had anyone of those people ever heard or seen Ginny so angry, than she had been that moment ago, apart from for the exception from last night. Last night she also had outdone herself.

“Sorry.” They all mumbled in unison.

“That’s better.” She declared in almost a triumphant sort of way.

“So...” Said Fred, quietly, not wanting to get his sister going again. “What is this about? I mean we’re just sitting here enjoying our breakfast, when you three come popping up out of our fireplace.”

“It’s Harry.” Hermione said quietly, and without explaining thrust the letter into Fred’s hand.

Fred glanced at the letter, and after reading comprehension was written all over his face. “What are we going to do?” He sat down on at the kitchen table, going pale.

The rest of the occupants of the apartment followed his lead.

“Do about what?” George now said more seriously.

With that Fred gave George the letter.

“Oh my.” George exclaimed. “Well let’s not all panic. We don’t know what’s going on yet. Maybe it’s just his scar.”

“That’s what we thought to,” Hermione said. “But he could’ve plainly told us that. There’s something else wrong, something more serious, otherwise he wouldn’t have had to disguise it.”

“Alright, we first need to think of what we’re going to do. If Harry is in fact in trouble, then we have to be very careful. You know how the

muggle's are if they see us they would probably call the proper authority's." Fred said.

"You mean police officers." Hermione said gently.

"Ya, them."

"We already have a plan, but what we have we can't do because we would have to do magic. That's where you two are needed, or at least one of you." Hermione spoke.

"So what's the plan?" Fred asked.

Hermione spent 20 minutes explaining their plan in-depth. Ginny helped fill in the blanks if she forgot any. Ron just sat and watched, not saying anything. The others took this as a sign of apprehension, and they left him alone.

Finally George was the first one to give his opinion on the whole matter. "It's a good idea, but it'll just take too long." He shook his head sadly.

"Yea, but that's why we came here early, so it'll give us enough time to fly to Surrey."

"Hermione, listen, Harry could be in real trouble, we don't know, but right now we have to think of the worst case scenario's. Flying to Surrey could take at least 2 good solid hours, and who knows what could possibly happen to Harry in that time."

"But..." Hermione started

"No listen Hermione," At this all three of the younger teens started laughing. George just sounded exactly like Ginny did last night when Hermione tried to interrupt.

"It will be easier if Fred and I go. We could apparate to Surrey, in no time flat. We won't make a move until nighttime, but this way we'll be there now, and if we see Harry in any further trouble we can help him."

"We all want to go to." Ginny wailed. Ron and Hermione nodded their agreement. They looked ready to pound George into mincemeat, at his ludicrous suggestion. If they didn't go it would be like they were abandoning Harry.

Angry himself George spoke rather abrasively, "Look we don't know what's going on, it could be his aunt and uncle, or it could be death eaters, **OR** it could even be Voldemort himself, or you all could be wrong and in the end it could just be his scar. But still we don't know what's going on, and if it is death eaters, and Voldemort, I'm not going to let you guys get hurt."

"George it wouldn't be Voldemort, Harry has the blood protection ward up against his aunt and uncle's house."

"Yes, Hermione he does, but it might not work anymore, who knows, maybe Voldemort finally found away to break the wards."

"Fred." Hermione pleaded, with the other twin.

Fred just looked at her sadly and replied to her plea. "I'm sorry, but I agree one hundred percent with George. We can't risk you all getting hurt. We'll go to Privet Drive, and then once we help Harry, we'll inform you immediately."

"I'm going to go at least." Ron finally spoke up for the first time since the meeting had started.

"Didn't you hear us Ronald, not of you will go with us, and that's final. If you say one more thing about this, we will go straight to mum and dad. Understand?"

"Yes, Fred." Ron mumbled, the two girls nodded.

"Good, now that we've spent wasted time arguing, we'll be going to get Harry, you three stay here, you can mind the store for us today."

"Isn't there a time when you two don't have money on your minds." Hermione laughed.

"Nope" Fred and George said in unison.

They all had to laugh at this. It wasn't that funny, but it was a good relief from the stress and worry that each one was feeling.

The three teenagers opened Weasley's Wizard Wheezes, while the two adults got their cloaks on, grabbed anything they thought would come in handy, for any sort of predicament that Harry could be in, and grabbed two sets of invisibility cloaks, newly remodelled so that it blocked out sound and scent of the person wearing it. And then they both snapped their fingers and apparated away to Privet Drive.

---

Privet Drive looked exactly the same as the twins had seen it the first night they went to rescue Harry in their fourth year. The only difference was that it was mid afternoon. The street was deserted; the only footsteps that could be heard were coming from them.

They stepped into the dark alleyway that connected Privet Drive to Magnolia Crescent. They changed from their regular travelling cloaks to their invisibility cloaks.

They made their way to the house marked number 4. At first it seemed like nobody was home, but then through the heavily draped window, they saw the silhouette of the large pig like man, Harry's uncle.

At seeing Harry's uncle, Fred and George at least were partially able to confirm that it wasn't death eaters, or Voldemort. They still weren't a hundred percent sure, because they could have portkeyed Harry away. But still the three day letter promises were made directly to the Dursley's so their chances of finding Harry at Privet Drive was very optimistic.

They reached the door and George murmured, "Alohamora." The door swung open, they ran inside the abysmally clean house, and up the stairs landing, when they heard Vernon come to examine the front entrance.

They planned to stay up on the landing until night. It was the best place to keep an eye on things. The twins had a full frontal view of the kitchen and the hallway, as well as the upstairs bedrooms. They would be able to know at all times what Vernon Dursley was up to.

"That's odd." Vernon muttered. "There's not even a strong wind. Oh well must've forgot to close it properly, when I came home."

"Yea, odd is right." Fred shouted loudly. "Oh wait it couldn't be wizards who entered your house, now could it. You Big OAF."

Fred felt something jab him in his ribs. "Sorry. Didn't mean to scream." He apologized to George.

They both were wearing walkie – talkies, a great idea given by Hermione, since the invisibility cloaks blocked out sound, and the twins needed to stay in contact with one another, it was a brilliant idea, simple, but still brilliant.

They sat silent waiting for day to turn to night, when darkness fell, the twins went into full rescue mode.

"Should we make our move now?" George asked Fred questioningly.

"Yea, lets go. Harry's room was the third room on the right."

They made their way towards Harry's room. Anticipation and dread filled them. They had no clue what to expect when they entered, and they were preparing themselves for the worst.

They reached Harry's room within twenty seconds, seeing that the door was not locked, which surprised them both, Fred grabbed hold of the handle, and gently opened the door.

The door made a loud squeak as it was being opened, and the owner of the house had audibly heard it.

"Bloody Hell!" George cried. "GO IN! HE'S COMING."

Fred and George both squeezed themselves into Harry's too small bedroom and scrunched themselves into a corner.

Vernon's huge body shook the house as he climbed the stairs. At the top of the landing he saw that Harry's door to his bedroom was ajar.

Vernon stood in the doorway, his wide frame taking up the whole area. "Who's there?" He asked dangerously. "I demand you show yourselves. Or are you just cowards?" He asked hoping to get arise out of the intruders, so that they would show themselves.

Obvious to Vernon there was nobody in the house, for he hadn't heard any footsteps, and hadn't seen any sign of life go up the stairs as he was examining the entrance door, and of course that was hours ago, if there was an intruder he would be gone.

Then it dawned on him. "Potter it had to be. True he didn't have his wand anymore, but that never stopped him from doing peculiar things when he was younger, like the time he was found on the school's rooftop, or the vanishing glass at the zoo. It was him." Vernon thought to himself.

The loud pounding of Vernon's retreating footsteps could probably be heard from Surrey to Hogsmeade, they were so loud.

The twins followed Vernon to the front foyer. They saw him enter the cupboard and close the door behind him. They heard two muffled voices coming from inside, one was defiantly coming from Vernon and the other was from Harry, even though his voice sounded foreign to them. Harry's voice was coming out hollow and raw.

They felt a cold shudder run down their spines as what happened next terrified them. A loud long yowl of pain ripped through the mostly silent house.

Fred and George could hear Harry crying and pleading with his uncle.

"It wasn't me, I swear, Uncle Vernon. I've been here the whole time."

"You lie, boy." The twins heard Harry's uncle respond.

Then there was more silent, the twins watched the closed door, picturing what was going on inside the cupboard. They wanted to enter, and blast Harry's uncle to smithereens, but they knew they would be in trouble by the whole order if they allowed themselves to do it, so they didn't. It was better to not get directly involved with the muggle. They would leave punishment for the older adult's in the



order to see to it. The twins knew that the Dursley man would get his "just dessert".

Fred and George figured the safest bet was to collect Harry after his uncle left the room. They waited and waited. Then the sound of a whip hitting flesh echoed through the house. They heard another loud wail, and then silence once more.

The twins saw Vernon Dursley leave the cupboard, and lock the door.

Unbeknownst to him he was staring directly at two seething identical redheads; a dark sinister smile covered Vernon's face from ear to ear.

## Chapter 4

Fred and George waited until Vernon went to bed. It would have been very easy for them to go to Harry's cupboard grab him, and than apparate away, but it was too risky. If Vernon saw the door flinging open once more, he'd for sure think that it was Harry, who was up to all the mischief. And then he'd be in even more trouble then he already was in. No Fred and George wanted a relatively clean escape. So they waited.

"Oh I wish I could do something to him. Just one go. C'mon Fred plllleeeeeaaaasssee." George begged his brother.

Fred just looked at George, frustration written all over his face. "NO!" He was always the more responsible of the two. Sure both him and George were troublemakers, and he had gotten into billions of scrapes himself, but he always knew when to draw the line, and now was the time. "Getting Harry and taking him back safely to our place, is our main concern at this point in time, NOTHING ELSE." He emphasized the last words, hoping that it penetrated into his brother's thick skull.

"Fine." Mumbled George, he perked his ear up when he heard a very distinct rumble coming from upstairs. "I hear snoring. You want to know what would be good with that..."

His sentence was interrupted when Fred cut him off savagely. "For the last time NO!" He glared at George; they needed to be fully alert, and not wasting time on any unnecessary drivel. "I don't think he's going to wake up anytime soon. Let's go."

They made their way from the front of the foyer to the cupboard under the stairs. The unknown rested darkly upon their shoulders, but they forced their feet to move quietly and slowly. They were still under their invisibility cloaks and all sounds were muffled, but it only seemed appropriate in their situation to tread quietly where they walked.

George got to the door first and muttered the incantation of Alohamora. The door locks gave way instantaneously, revealing only darkness.

"I can't see anything." George complained.

"Are you a wizard or what?" Fred reprimanded from behind him.

In truth Fred knew what George was getting at. His brother was scared, scared of what they would find if they did make the room brighter. For the smell alone that drifted to their noses, made them want to retch. The odour contained a mixture of blood, vomit, urine, and human excrements. In one word the room smelled like death.

"It's now or never." George trembled. He didn't want to see what was inside not for any amount of galleons that could be offered to him.

"Lumo." The tip of his unlit wand now held a bright light that allowed the room to glow, showing all of the secrets it had hidden from the world.

They looked around the grotesque cupboard. Once they saw what was on the inside they wanted the darkness back.

"Oh God." George groaned, becoming weak in his knees, almost ready to topple over, he was able to pull himself up and gain control, and that was saying something when compared to Fred.

"I think I'm gonna be sick." Fred said, after observing what met his eyes, and ran out of the cupboard, and into the Dursley's living room, he threw off the invisibility cloak, and vomited right in Petunia's prized winning Hibiscus plant.

Fred returned several minutes later, wiping his mouth on his sleeve.

The smell did not prepare the Weasley twins for what they saw, and that was a major shock to them. When they looked around the cupboard first, all they saw were insects, and bugs, that inhabited the tiny space.

When they took another look they were able to see a bed pushed into the left hand corner, further down from view. It could not even be called a bed. It was more like a cot. The cot was rusty and unsteady. The mattress had holes in it, and springs were popping out at various places, jabbing at the body lying on top of it.

The twins wanted nothing to do but run away from the horrors. They were in too deep over their heads. They should have gotten an order member to help them.

The body that was lying on the cot was of course Harry's, but not the Harry that they were used to seeing. This Harry was unconscious. He was half naked, and there were lash marks covering every inch of exposed skin on his chest, arms, and legs. The twins could now confirm that the lashings that they heard previously that night had come from a belt. Handprints were embedded on Harry's face. His neck as well contained handprints, but there were fingernail scratches running up and down his throat. One of his hands was tied to the so – called bed, and the other one looked like a blue and purple rubber glove.

Fred and George glanced down at the lower half of Harry's body, not wanting to see anymore, they just couldn't peel their eyes from the horror that their "Brother" had endured. He wasn't their blood brother, but every member of the Weasley family had always considered Harry a brother, or son, except in Ginny's case, that was totally different, but he was still part of the family.

The lower half of Harry's body wasn't any better than the top. He was wearing nothing but a ratty pair of boxer shorts. The boxer shorts and Harry's legs, and surrounding areas of the bed were covered in his own personal waste. Urine and feces covered every inch of the poor boy's lower body, and yet he remained oblivious to all that was around him, lost in the unknown.

The marks and waste on Harry's body would be the easiest to clean up; it was the damage that had happened to his body that would be the most challenging. From the look of Harry he could have been the poster child for a third world country. His flesh clung to his skeleton, and there was no excess fat on any part of his body. Harry's face was

sunken and shallow; there were blue bags under his eyes. His arms and legs were spindly, and looked like they could snap just like a stick.

For a minute the twins thought that he was dead, but the shallow rising of Harry's chest, told them otherwise, he was alive, but barely.

"I'm just going to go upstairs for a quick minute. " George said getting over his initial shock at seeing Harry's dilapidated body.

"NO WE GET HARRY AND GO." Fred half whispered and screamed at his brother. "Revenge will come later, that I can defiantly promise."

His eyes glazed over at the thought of Vernon Dursley trembling at wizard's feet.

"He'll be fine for another minute." George yelled straight back.

"Look at him. He's barely breathing as is. I don't know how much longer he can hold on in his position."

**"I'M GOING, AND IF YOU SO MUCH AS TRY TO STOP ME FRED WEASLEY, SO HELP ME, I WON'T BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS."** George pointed his wand at Fred as if he was going to annihilate him into yesteryear.

"Fine, go, but make it fast." Fred knew that it was impossible to stop George from doing what he wanted when he got like this. It did not happen very often, but when it did, everybody would be wise to take cover.

As George made his way up the stairs Fred stayed with Harry in the cupboard. He could not let Harry stay in this mess, so with a couple of scourgify charms; both the cupboard and Harry were clean. A pine forest fresh scent filled his nostrils.

Fred then conjured up some cotton pyjamas, to keep Harry warm. And a sad smile filled his face as he saw Harry burrow deep into the newfound warmth.

He would have moved Harry from the cupboard, but decided it was best if George was there to help him. He did not know the extent to

Harry's internal injuries, and did not want to cause further harm, by moving him himself.

He conjured a chair from the living room and magically expanded the cupboard so that both the chair and him can fit comfortably inside. He sat by Harry, not daring to touch the injured boy, and that is when he heard it.

A small pleading voice like the sound of a child was muffled by sleep and fear. "Help me, Hermione. Please help me." A single tear fell from Harry's face as he scrunched himself further into the mattress, his face furrowed with pain. The boy said no more as he fell back into nothingness.

"She is Harry, we all are." Fred said soothingly, wanting to erase the expression that was written upon Harry's face.

Fred got an idea, he did not know how it had occurred but he knew that it would help Harry feel comforted.

He reached across to Harry's good hand that was tied to the bed and just rubbed it gently. He started singing a song that just popped into his head, he never heard it before, but in a sense it felt like he had. It was a children's song, and he guessed Harry must have had it sung to him when he was a child, and he felt protected and loved.

"I'll love you forever,

"I'll love you for always,

As long as I'm living,

My baby you'll be."

Fred sang it the way a father would sing to his infant, soft and lovingly, over and over.

Harry heard this in his stupor, because a small smile crept into his sleeping face, and for once a feeling of happiness overshadowed that of fear.

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While Fred was comforting Harry upstairs George made his way to the Dursley's master bedroom, enraged beyond belief.

He could still remember the last time he felt this angry, someone had made a rather nasty comment about how his family was poor. He got so angry that that person was nothing but a piece of dragon dung by the time he got through transfiguring him. He smiled smugly to himself. People underestimated the Weasley family so much, but they never knew. Never knew the powers in which this family held.

He did not even realize that he made it to the master bedroom, but he did. He opened the door with a loud "BANG". He wanted his presence to be known.

"Wha...uhgn." Vernon jumped up from the bed still in sleep.

"You BASTARD! You will pay for what you've done to Harry, and to Wizards in general." George spoke venomously.

Vernon's eyes became round and murderous, as he finally understood what was going on. Anger pulsed through his blood; he pumped his stomach, to make himself look more threatening.

"So the freak has sent in reinforcements, now has he? He will pay later for this. Mark my words." He told the younger boy that dared to stand in his bedroom. "Now leave this house, or you will just make Harry's punishment a lot more worse than even you're kind can not imagine." Vernon spoke the words carefully wanting to see fear spark in the brown eyes of the intruder.

The boy looked young, about the same age as Harry, and Vernon knew that he had the advantage over him. A tingle swept through his body, as he thought of what he could do to this boy, who could use no magic. He waited for the boy to respond, to his threat.

"Thank you, but I'm quite comfortable where I am right now." George said sweetly, to the oversized man. And that's when he pulled out his wand.

Vernon laughed; he could not suppress it, “ You can’t.” he continued to laugh. “You’re not old enough. I know you’re not allowed to use magic until you reach a certain age, or otherwise you’ll be expelled from that school of yours.” He said gleefully.

“Oh right. How could I be so stupid?” George slowly lowered his wand.

Vernon gave another laugh, this one out of triumph.

“Although,” George continued bringing his wand back at arms length, “Do not let my appearance fool you. I may look younger than my age true, and have had to show I.D. many times when wanting to go to the Hog’s Head for a firewhiskey, but I assure you muggle, that I am of age. I can do magic freely, and without any reason for fear of expulsion.” George spoke in an almost graceful way; he liked watching how Vernon turned a shade of green with every word that he spoke.

“You can’t.” Now it was Vernon’s turn to be afraid.

“No?” George questioned him. “Watch me.” He spat.

He raised his wand once more. Vernon trembled with trepidation. He knew once he was alone he would finish Harry off, just like he promised to do.

As if George could read his mind he spoke. “No, I don’t think the Boy – Who – Lived, will ever be returning here. Now where was I. Oh yes, this shall be sweet. CRUCIO.” George cried.

Vernon screamed and his body was convulsing on the bed. It was pain beyond anything he had ever experienced in his life. It felt like his whole body was on fire, and sharp little knives were poking at his skin. All his organs seemed to have closed up, he felt like he could not breathe, even though he knew he was screaming, his heart seemed to have stopped, even though he knew it was pumping, and his blood no longer brought warmth, even though he knew it was running. He wanted it to stop, and when it hardly even started it ended.



George left the curse on Vernon for only a second before releasing him. "Hurts doesn't it?" George asked in mock concern, a mad gleam in his eye.

Vernon was trembling from head to foot, small gasps of breath caught in his throat. He shivered once more when he saw the boy raise his wand again.

"Now you know what real pain is. Let's see it again, shall we. CRUCIO!" George yelled for the second time that night.

Again the man was covered with the same pain. And then from far away he saw another person enter the bedroom. He hoped it would be his saviour.

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Fred rushed up the stairs, when he heard the scream of Harry's uncle. He knew what those screams were and meant. He hated that muggle with a passion, but nobody deserved the cruciatus, not even Voldemort himself.

He stole silently into the bedroom and with a loud yell he roared, "FINITE INCANTATUM."

Vernon felt the pain vanish again. Relief quickly swept through him. He could not make out much more, because of the stars that were circling around his spinning head.

"Help me." Vernon begged his saviour.

"I show no mercy. Especially where it concerns you." Fred spat at him angrily.

"Then why did you help me?" Vernon panted in between long deep breaths.

"It wasn't for you. I just didn't want to see my brother here get in trouble. Now what I will do to you will not be as kind as what my brother here has done." Fred said menacingly. "I will leave you to Harry's protector's. And they will not show you the generosity that I have recently displayed. No for they don't like it when someone hurts

the wizarding world's protector. Enjoy the time that you have left.” Fred said as he made his way towards George who stood stunned in the middle of the room.

George never thought his brother would go against him. But he guessed that it was better that he did. If Fred had not come into the room he probably would have continued until the man fell down dead, even though he knew it was not possible not with the wand that he was using.

“Let’s go.” Fred said harshly.

George winced, Fred never talked to him this way, unless he was really angry, and right now he was furious.

“I...” He started.

Fred spun around glaring at his twin. “Do you know the kind of damage that you have just caused? An unforgivable curse, I can’t believe you. You of all people should know better. What’s going to happen when the order comes, and sees the muggle? They’ll know that he was under the cruciatus curse, and when he describes you, it will be Azkaban.”

“First, Dumbledore won’t let me go to Azkaban, I’m too much part of the order, and they need us. Second, they won’t have any proof. He may be able to describe me, but don’t forget about the ton – tongue toffee incident, I can say that’s the only time he’s ever seen me, and that he’s just trying to put the blame on somebody. Plus there’s no proof.”

“Your wand.” Fred retorted back. “They have Priori Incantantum.”

“I can deny it.” George said lazily.

“You didn’t.”

“I did.”

“Oh.” Fred said. But was not too amazed at what George did. He would have probably done it himself if he remembered to grab it before they left to rescue Harry.

What George had done was grab a fake wand off of the shelves of Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes. This wand was meant as a toy for kids, but it still held magical powers, and with a wizard that was strong enough, it could perform any magic that the wizard casted. The twins were able to come up with away that the wand would lose all memory, so if a priori Incantantum was applied to the wand; there would be no way of knowing which spells or if any were used.

“But it was still wrong.”

“It didn’t hurt him. Not like a real cruciatus would. Don’t you remember, that the impostor Mad-Eye Moody, told us that for any of the unforgivables to work then the person has to feel real hatred, and want to do harm, they want to feel power and cause pain. I just did it for revenge, that’s it. In no way did I mean to hurt Dursley more then he deserved, so what he was really feeling was not the full effect of the cruciatus, but a minor one.

“Ok, let’s just forget it and call it a truce.” Fred said trying to drop the subject completely.

“Sounds good to me.” George replied more jovially.

They descended down the stairs and headed for the cupboard.

George untied Harry’s wrist from the bed, but when it came time to moving him they were both stumped.

“I can’t see how we’re going to do this.” George whispered.

“Neither do I. To be truthful, I never thought his injuries would be this bad.”

“Should we try a stupefy.”

“No that won’t work, he’ll be stunned, but the injuries that are going on in his insides will not stop working.” Fred rubbed his hair in his

hands out of frustration. He never felt so lost. It was like working out a puzzle, and then the piece fell into place.

"I know what we're going to do." He pointed his wand at Harry and muttered, "Wingardium Leviosa."

Harry's body flew into the air, but it did not move. Both boys simultaneously sighed in relief, as this part of the plan worked.

George conjured up a stretcher and Fred lowered Harry's body unto it.

From his pocket George took out a small rubber duck, he placed Harry's good hand on top of it, closing his thin hand tightly around the object. Fred and George, as well, touched a part of the rubber duck.

"It's almost time." Fred looked at his watch. "3 minutes to go. I've changed the portkey to take us to Hogsmeade, instead of our place, that way we can get Harry to Hogwarts, where Madame Pomfrey can examine Harry."

"Sounds good to me. What about Ron, Ginny, and Hermione? They're going to be so worried."

"Well I figured Albus will tell them, he'll find out about what happened to Harry, and then we'll just ask him to check up on them, or send somebody to. 1 more minute."

"I forgot to do something." George grumbled as he released the rubber duck.

He made his way to the outside of the cupboard. He did not want anyone getting in or out of the house, except for them, and the members of the order who would be sent to Privet Drive to clean up Vernon's mess.

"Sealero." The house sealed itself shut, and George took his place by his brother and Harry.

"Ok, this is it."

They both felt a pull around their navels. The portkey had worked. They were spinning through the air, as fast as the wind. This euphoria only lasted a split second, and by the time they knew it, it was over, they came to an abrupt stop, almost making them topple over. Harry, however, was lying just like he did when they left Privet Drive. He was oblivious to all that was around them.

The twins covered themselves up in the invisibility cloaks. Fred split his in half, with his wand, so that there were two, one for himself and one for Harry. He extended the cloaks, making up for the lost halves. They both hadn't thought of Harry when grabbing only two. They thought that either Harry would move, or if worse came to worse they could carry him under the cloak, they never thought that Harry would be unmovable.

"This way." Fred murmured.

"I know where we are, but thanks for the reminder." George hissed at him. They were in walkie – talkie mode again.

Harry, who couldn't talk, was rigged with a tracking device on his cloak, in order to keep the twins aware of his position, and to make sure that he did not float away from them (his stretcher was charmed to float by itself, so the twins would not have to point their wands or carry it themselves). The tracking device was linked to Fred's watch. Right now it was glowing a brilliant blue, which meant he was close. If it glowed yellow it would mean that the stretcher was wandering away, and if the watch glowed orange it would mean that Harry was way off course from them. If he did wander too far the hands on the watch would point Fred in the direction Harry was going, in order to get him back on track.

Right now they were in the middle of an open field in Hogsmeade. It was late and nothing could be seen, except for a faint outline of a house. The house was known as the shrieking shack. The shack was supposedly hunted, but in their fifth year they learned the truth, it was all because of Remus, a close friend to Harry and the Weasley's. They would use the shrieking shack as their entrance into Hogwarts; this would help to overcome the wards that Dumbledore had set up around the ancient school.

They blindly walked and stumbled towards the house, they did not want to use any magic, unless necessary, so they could not use the Lumos spell.

"I can't see anything." Fred hissed at George, as he stumbled for the millionth time over a loose stone in the pathway.

"I can make out the outline of a fence, we should be there in two minutes." George was in the lead and had a clearer view of what was going on in the front. "OOPS. I was wrong." He moaned as he clutched his stomach, make that one minute." He crashed into the fence, reaching it earlier than he thought, in the dark his perception was way off track.

They hopped over the rotting wood that once looked like it was made of gold, and towards the shack, they went.

Inside the Shrieking Shack was mouldy, the walls looked like they were ready to give way, and the floors were sagging in places, making the rooms in which they passed slope at different angles. The smell that the house permeated was almost comparable to the smell that greeted the twins when they entered the cupboard. This time it was only a faint hint of the smell, and it lacked some of the mixture, so it was not as nauseating to the senses.

The door that would lead them to Hogwarts stood opposite of the stairwell. Fred opened the door and examined the entrance. He could not sense any danger it seemed fairly safe.

"I'm gonna go first. I'll let you take Harry when I know everything's safe and the hump back witches entrance isn't barricaded. If it is then we'll have to wait here and go though Honeyduke's passage tomorrow, but what Harry told me last year nobody seems to know about it."

"That's fine. We'll stay here like good little boys."

Fred just rolled his eyes, he knew George was ready to start some trouble, it had been a stressful day, and one of the ways the Weasley twins reduced their stress was to cause mayhem, on an unsuspecting victim.

“Wouldn’t it be grand if we just happened to bump into Filch in the halls. We can finally get him back for always accusing us of starting things.”

“George, he had every right to accuse us, everything came from us.” He laughed. “I’m gonna go wait and don’t go anywhere until I say it’s clear.” Before he left Fred passed George his watch, so that he could guard over Harry now.

Fred left through the door, seconds turned to minutes, and the moon was going down. George had not realized how late it was, Vernon took so long going to bed and the events that happened afterwards took so much time that a new day was going to start, in just a few hours.

“George, George, can you hear me? I’m not sure the radius these talkie – walkies have.”

“They’re called walkie – talkies, Fred. And yeah I can hear you. Is everything good, can I come with Harry now?”

“Yea things are good, I’m still in the tunnel because the reception will diminish within the boundaries of Hogwarts, but everything’s already been tested. We’re not barricaded in, come bring Harry.”

George guided Harry through the passage, it took a lot longer than was normal because of the invisibility cloaks, but at last they made it through to Hogwarts.

Fred was there to greet them, and he helped pull George to his feet. They took off their invisibility cloaks, so they could now talk.

They examined Harry; he still looked the same, just more at rest. They made it to the steps that entered into the infirmary, and that’s when they heard it, one could not forget the voice of the school’s most feared teacher, and he was also in the Order of the Phoenix.

The twins turned around slowly trying to cover Harry, but it was no use. The stretcher was too long and too wide.

“Well, well, well. What do we have here?” A sinister smile spread across the pale face. The dark greasy hair and the rising of the sun that shone on this man, made him look even more menacing than the twins ever thought he could be.



## Chapter 5

Severus Snape had decided to stay at Hogwarts during the summer. There was no reason for him to go to Snape Manor; it was an empty and very cold place to live. Hogwarts he felt would suffice as living quarters, unless for some reason he desired to go back there, but he knew he never would. Staying at Hogwarts during summer vacation always had a brighter side, it allowed for him to be able to plan lessons earlier and have more time working on his own projects.

Severus had spent the majority of the day; revising lesson plans for first, second, and third years, and checking inventory to see what would be needed for the following year. The other years lessons plan he would do the following day.

Around 10:00 at night, he decided it was about time to start working on his many new potions in which he was creating. He had about twenty cauldrons bubbling, and brewing, all calculated to perfection. He examined them all making sure that special precautions were being taken, because each potion had specific needs, and he did not need anything happen that would set him back. Some of these potions had taken months, even years to create, and he was not about to let sloppiness ruin all his hard work.

Severus stopped short when he came to the last one. The potion was a dark blue that was emitting bright red sparks. Everything seemed to be going according to plan, and at midnight he would be able to add the unicorn hair that would help purify the potion, and the dragon's blood that would make the potion stronger. This one was a special request for Dumbledore that would help the Order immensely and the general wizarding public. This was meant to stop two out of three of the unforgivables.

This potion would make the drinker immune to the curses, something that was never done before. This would surely win him an Order of Merlin First Class.

All the potion required was for the user to take three small drops, and the cruciatus and the imperious curse would no longer affect the person. Severus had been preparing and testing this potion for over

two years, and only recently was he able to figure out how to block the two spells. The dark blue colour of the potion meant that the cruciatus could be blocked. The red sparks that were flying everywhere meant that the user would be able to throw off the imperious curse without any hesitation.

There were just a few minor adjustments that needed to be done in order for the potion to work to its full extent, but it was done.

At midnight Severus added the unicorn hair. He stirred the potion twelve times clockwise and then fourteen times anti – clockwise. He had to let the potion sit for three more hours before he could move on to adding the dragon's blood.

During that time, he read the daily prophet. It was the same old thing. There were small breakouts of Death Eater attacks, and Kingsley Shacklebolt the new Minister for Magic, was searching endlessly to bring Voldemort down, while trying to repress the attacks from the Death Eaters.

*'Bunch of Rubbish.'* He snarled to himself as he folded the newspaper up, and threw it in the fire. He watched as the corners of the paper furled until there was nothing left.

*"They'll never be able to find Voldemort, unless he wants to be found, it's just a waste of time."* He thought amusedly to himself.

At 2:58 he went to check up on the potion. He smiled happily to himself when he saw the contents in the cauldron, the colours of the liquid changed, and the dark blue was now a light blue, and the bright red spark was nothing more but a soft glow of orange. He added the Dragon's blood turned it clockwise three times.

This time the potion seemed to let out a multicolour vapour. And he knew that it had worked.

All he needed to do now was test it on himself. More than likely he knew that he was going to end up the guinea pig, but it would have to wait; he wanted some sleep that night.

Severus was so tired and had a bad headache that he decided to see Madame Pomfrey for a pain reliever potion, since he was clear out of his private stock.

That's when he saw them. All his teaching years at Hogwarts he had never known anything like the two that he was going to face in a second. Sure there were lots of kids that seemed comparable, but each year they found a way to keep outdoing themselves.

He shuddered with distaste. There were too many of them, red hair, lanky bodies, they thought they ran the place, well with the exception of Potter.

He was glad that they had left Hogwarts a few months earlier before the last term ended. If they had not then he would have been ready for St. Mungo's insane asylum ward. After seven years of putting up with them, he was ready to crack. He noticed during that year that he was not the only staff member to feel this way whenever the Weasley twins were mentioned. Professor McGonagall looked at times as if she were ready to tear her hair out, and poor Professor Flitwick always gave a soft yelp at the names of Fred and George.

Now here they were standing on the stairs with a battered Potter, on a stretcher.

*"Probably a trick gone wrong."* He thought to himself, with a smirk.

That's when he let himself be known to the two red haired men. "Uh Hum." He said, he knew that tone would make any students blood run cold, and he loved it. The fear that he caused always brought delight when he saw the children dart trying desperately to escape his wrath.

However, the fear that was usually brought out did nothing to affect the twins. Instead they shot their old professor a look of utmost hate. They had seen him during Order meetings, but both sides never bothered with one another, unless it was deemed absolutely necessary.

"What do you want Snape." George seethed through clenched teeth. He hated the man that was standing before him.

“Now, now, Mr. Weasley. Where are your manners? I know you’re mother did not bring you up this way.” He smirked, knowing he would get a rise out of the young man.

“My manners left when they saw you, and your great big nose.”

“If you don’t mind, Severus, we have things that needs to be done. Good day.” Fred said trying to intervene between the two.

“Actually I do mind. As I see you’ve got the wizarding worlds golden boy, on a stretcher. So tell me, was it one of your little pranks gone awry?”

“It is none of your business. It is between Harry, us (he said this pointing to himself and George), Madame Pomfrey, and Albus, and whoever else Harry wishes to disclose his injuries to,” Fred tried to control his voice with all his might. “but I highly doubt that he would come running to a greasy git like you, when he awakens, so Good Morning.” He put a hand to his mouth trying to suppress the laughter that wanted to escape.

“I will not be insulted by the two of you, leave this premise right now.” Severus’ anger was growing, soon he would give them a what for.

“Yea and leave Harry to you I don’t think so.” George had almost sounded like a snake as he said this. “And since when do you own this school, I always thought it was the ministry, you can’t tell us what to do. So mind your own bloody business.” George cursed.

“You two do not have permission to be here, Potter on the other hand seeing that he is a student should see Madame Pomfrey, but you two leave.” He pulled out his wand, and yelled. “Dimitto.”

The two boys felt their bodies fly forward pulling them both in separate directions away from their hurt friend. They came to a sudden crash when they felt their bodies banging against the entrance door to Hogwarts.

Snape had forgot to open the doors when brandishing the two devils away. “*An extra bonus.*” He thought to himself, when he heard the boys’ bodies slamming into the door.

“WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON HERE?” Yelled a voice from across the hall.

The blue of the nightshirt would have usually matched the sparkling blue eyes, of the elderly headmaster. However, in his given state his eyes were burning black with fury.

Albus Dumbledore had been in his bed sleeping when he heard shouts and banging coming from within the corridors of the magnificent castle. He jumped up from his bed, and rushed to see what and who was causing such a racket, this early in the morning.

He was quite surprised when he saw the potions professor standing on the marble staircase, yelling at nobody in particular.

“Severus, I’m astonished at you. Making so much noise at this hour.” Dumbledore reprimanded his staff member. “I would think you would have some common sense.”

Severus sighed inwardly; he could not deal with all of this tonight, first the potions, next the splitting headache, then the Weasley twins and Potter, and now the headmaster. He wondered how much more he would have to endure before it was all over.

“Do not lecture me, old man.” He spat at the elderly old wizard.

“Now, now, Severus, lets talk about this calmly.”

“There is nothing to talk about I have handled the situation, and it has been taken care of.”

“Oh, so that’s why you threw us at the entrance door.” A dishevelled George said as he ascended up the stairs, followed by a similar dishevelled boy.

There was a small difference to the boys. Fred the usual peacemaker had his wand pointed directly at Severus’ chest.

“Mr. Weasley put that down. (Dumbledore had only called Fred by his surname because he was tired and could not distinguish between the two; it was just easier, as not to insult anybody).

Fred obediently lowered his wand, but glared spitefully at the potions professor.

“Somebody explain to me what is going on right now!” Professor Dumbledore yelled in exasperation.

“Potter, that’s what is going on.” Professor Snape motioned his hand to the still boy lying on the stretcher.

Professor Dumbledore’s gaze switched from the three angry people in front of him to the frail body behind him. His blue eyes, which were not sparkling before, were definitely not sparkling now, instead they looked like a whirlwind of anger.

“Are you telling me that a seriously injured boy is fighting for his life, and you three are standing here arguing with one another.” Dumbledore stood in astonishment.

In unison all three heads bowed in shame. They each had forgotten that Harry was injured and in desperate need of help, and here they were acting like a bunch of two year olds.

“You should all be ashamed of yourselves. I thought that at least you two would have cared more, and put aside your petty differences for the sake of your friends. I am very disappointed.”

“Sorry.” They all mumbled ashamedly.

“If you three are done, let’s get Harry to the infirmary.” Dumbledore said harshly.

Nobody could recall a time when the old headmaster had ever sounded like that before. They had all made the Headmaster both disappointed, and angry, something that was never done before. Not even when Snape had confided in Dumbledore about being a death eater, and not even the time the twins had accidentally changed their headmaster’s hair to a fluorescent pink, had Dumbledore been this angry, and upset.

Dumbledore floated Harry the rest of the way to the infirmary, followed by Snape and the Weasley twins taking up the rear.

“Poppy.” Dumbledore called from inside the infirmary.

He laid Harry on top of one of the beds, removing the stretcher from beneath him. He left the three other people there standing stock still, and made his way to meet the person he just called for.

The motherly old medi – witch came out of her office wearing a bewildered expression on her face. Her hair was scrunched up in a tight bun, and she was still wearing her night robes.

Madame Pomfrey was quite surprised at being woken up so early, especially since it was summer. Because of the summer, there were no students there to get injured, or sick. If it were a teacher, which was very rare, because most had their own potions to help whatever ailed them, they would not be calling on her so early in the morning. For once Madame Pomfrey was confused to say the least.

“What is it Professor Dumbledore?” She asked concerned.

“It’s Harry Potter.”

“What has that boy done now, I tell you he cannot even stand two minutes without getting into trouble. If he did something stupid I will not mend him this time.” Poppy said infuriated.

“I don’t know what to tell you Poppy, I found the Weasley twins, and Severus on the marble staircase headed towards the infirmary’s direction, Mr Potter on a stretcher. Maybe it will be better if you ask them what happened yourself. I am also curious in knowing.” Dumbledore said sadly.

Madame Pomfrey and Professor Dumbledore made their way towards the rather unusual group that were huddled in the far end of the infirmary.

When Madame Pomfrey saw the sick boy sleeping, she knew that it was not the way Harry would normally come in to the infirmary. Sure he was hurt every time he was there, but those hurts never left him fighting for his life, and this she realized was exactly what he was doing.

“Explain.” She said tartly.

“Well you see this is what happened.” George said but was soon drowned out by Fred’s Version.

“Hermione got a letter.”

“We were at his uncle’s house.”

“Snape threw a curse at us.”

“And now we’re here.”

Poppy Pomfrey was terribly confused by the end of the jumbled version she looked to Dumbledore for help; maybe he understood the meaning of what they said.

Dumbledore just smiled at the motherly matron; apparently he was just as lost as she.

“Lets try this one more time.” Amusement sparkled in his old grandfatherly blue eyes. “Fred why don’t you explain.”

Fred went into a long and winded version of how Ron, Hermione, and Ginny flooed to their apartment, and presented Harry’s letter to them. He then went on to explain what they saw and heard when they went to the Dursley’s house. He finally finished with a last long breath about how they ended up at Hogwarts, and the encounter with Professor Snape.

After hearing Fred’s rendition of the story, all fell silent sitting down with dumbstruck faces. Professor Snape seemed to be the only one sneering, happy that the Gryffindor golden boy had finally been put in place.

“Severus do not let me hear that you were cursing former or any other students ever again.” Dumbledore turned to face the man that was sitting before him.

He then turned to face his medi – witch, “Madame Pomfrey, help Harry.” Dumbledore sounded older than his 154 years.



"Yes, sir." She said through her tears. Even though she was usually harsh with her patients, she still cared deeply for each one, and hated to see any of them in trouble.

"Cruatio alius contraries." Madame Pomfrey said.

She waved her wand around Harry's body. A soft white glow appeared, blinding everyone in the room. It lasted for about five minutes, and then it slowly faded, as the spell was doing its job.

Madame Pomfrey drained from all the magic she had to use to heal the patient, flopped down next to Dumbledore.

"He's healed." She waved her hand, brushing a loose strand of hair from her face.

"Then why isn't he awake?" Fred looked at Harry worriedly.

"The spell was able to heal all of his internal and external injuries, but I'm afraid that Harry will have to wake up on his own. He needs to deal with what has happened, and this appears to be his way. Give it time; soon you'll all have him back. Now if you don't mind I'm tired, I'm going to go to bed, but I'll be back in a couple of hours to check up on him, if there are any changes just call me."

"Thank you, Poppy." Dumbledore stated, sadly. "Fred, George, you can fire call Hermione, and let her know that they can all floo here and see him, I know they're probably beside themselves with worry by now." Albus Dumbledore pulled out some floo powder and held it out in an outstretched hand for one of the twins to take.

"Thank you, sir." Fred said grabbing the soft powder. He knelt down on the floor by the fire and tossed in the floo powder. "Weasley's Wizard Wheezes." His head felt like it had become detached from his body, as it floated to its destination, it was an odd sensation.

Fred found the sight that met his eyes in his apartment rather amusing. All three teenagers were sleeping where they last left them. Hermione's head was sprawled atop the table, her bushy hair covering every inch of the glass top. Ron was lying on four chairs,

because of how tall he was, and Ginny was sleeping curled in a small ball at the corner of the kitchen on the floor.

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"Hey Gin, Harry's ok." Fred said quietly to her, not wanting to frighten his little sister.

Ginny opened up her tired brown eyes, and looked at her brother's head floating in the fireplace. Ginny could not comprehend the person whose head was floating in the fireplace at first, only recently had she been able to fall asleep, and she had woken up disoriented.

"Fred?" She asked him.

"Yea, did you hear me?" Ginny shook her head. "Harry's going to be ok."

Ginny screamed in delight hugging her favourite brother tightly. She admired them and loved them all, but Fred was her favourite.

Ginny's scream had awoken the other two who were slumbering. With sleepy heads they looked at Fred the same way as Ginny had done.

"Harry's going to be fine." Fred said for the third time that night. This time it was as if he were insuring himself as well as the other two.

"Can we see him?" Hermione and Ron asked in one voice.

"Yea, Dumbledore gave all of you permission to floo to Hogwarts."

"Wait a second, I thought you guys were going to bring Harry back here." Hermione stated.

"We were, but Harry was in a lot more trouble then we would have ever thought. So we had to change our plans. Sorry we would have told you, but there was no way of getting in touch."

"W-w-what time is it anyways?" Ron asked trying to hold back a yawn that escaped his mouth.

“5:30.”

“I want to go see Harry, NOW!” Ginny demanded.

Everybody knew by now that what Ginny wanted Ginny got, there was never any point in arguing with the fiery redheaded girl, she always won. Besides this time everyone was agreeing with her. They all wanted to see Harry.

One by one they all flooded to the infirmary where Harry was lying on the bed, no sign of movement had been noticed.

Ginny was the first one to the bedside, where a tired Dumbledore was sitting, along with Snape.

“Oh Harry.” Ginny cried at seeing him oblivious to everything.

“There, there Ms. Weasley, Harry will be fine. I can assure you that.” Dumbledore tried comforting her.

“Hey mate, you want to go flying. If you do then you have to wake up.” Ron tried coaxing his friend.

“Ron, leave him, he’ll come around on his own. This is Harry’s way of dealing with what has happened, and until he’s come to terms with this he won’t wake.” Hermione told him just like Madame Pomfrey had already explained to the older boys, also breaking down and crying.

Ron went to her side, and lovingly put his arms around her and embraced the one he loved. He knew right there and then that Hermione was the one he wanted for life.

“What are you all crying about?” Snape asked them. “We all knew that Gryffindor’s golden boy would be fine.” He said. “Now if you don’t mind Albus I’m going to bed, Potter here has been nothing but a disturbance, and because of him it seems like I won’t even be able to get my bloody potion.”

Snape was ready to leave his robes already billowing around his ankles when he heard Dumbledore from behind him.

“Severus you will come with me!” He said softly, but firmly. The potions master knew not to argue with the old man this time.

Dumbledore turned toward the children and said in a more softer and gentler tone that was undemanding. "The rest of you can visit Harry, I'm sure he would appreciate it. There's something I need to speak with the professor about, then I'll be contacting the order, and you're parents. This he spoke to the Weasley twins. There will be punishment. Nobody is allowed to leave Hogwarts ground. Do I make myself clear." This was not a question, but a statement.

The others nodded in agreement. They would never have left Harry's side even if the old headmaster had never suggested that they stay. They would have argued, and then got Ginny to do her magic. They finally got Harry safe and protected, and now, they would not let him out of their sight.

“Severus come!”

And that was all the children heard from the professor's conversation as the two of them walked out of the infirmary and down the large hallway to Dumbledore's office.

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Once they reached the gargoyle that blocked Dumbledore's office, he cried out the password jovially. "Lucky Charms," His eyes twinkling.

“You know Severus, they’re magically delicious.” At the mention of this Albus Dumbledore seemed to be behaving like an overexcited seven year old. “They’re actually really good, you should try it someday. The muggles eat it for breakfast.”

Severus looked at Dumbledore as if he snapped. “You’re mental old man.” He hissed.

The stone gargoyle jumped back allowing entrance into the circular and extravagant office.

“Sit!” Albus said pointing a long bony finger at the chair opposite his desk.

Snape sat watching as the old wizard took a seat behind his desk.

Albus' fingers arched under his chin he looked quizzically at Severus for a minute trying to discern his thoughts.

"So Severus," He began not knowing how to start. "Do you really hate the boy so much, even though he has done nothing to you."

Severus was startled; this was not where he was expecting Dumbledore to go. He had thought that Dumbledore wanted to talk about Voldemort, and another mission that that the potion master would have to go on.

"Yes, Potter has been nothing but a menace since he came to this school. In my opinion it would have been better if Voldemort had actually killed him when he was a baby." He sneered.

"You don't mean that now do you? Or are you just saying that because you're mad that James saved your life, and now you feel like you owe it to Harry to save his?" Dumbledore stared at the cold-hearted man, knowing that it was not the way that that man actually felt.

"I DO MEAN THAT." He yelled. "Now if you don't mind, I'm tired, it's been a long night and morning, and I want to get to bed." He started to get up from the pouf chair in which he had been sitting on, but the look that Dumbledore gave him, made him reconsider.

"Tell me something," Dumbledore said calmly. "If you really hated Harry as much as you claim, how come you tried to save his life numerous times, when one time would have been sufficient?"

"Because I felt obligated to."

"Even though you knew that James was behind the whole plot at first, you were never really obligated."

"I don't know what you're playing at, but if you continue talking in riddles, I will give Harry to Voldemort on a silver platter." His black eyes enraged.

"You're free to go Severus." He said sadly.

Severus made his way to the door and as he was about to push it open, he heard Dumbledore speak.

"Just tell me one thing, just so that I can have it confirmed. Can you really hate your own son that much?"

"Y-WHAT?" He looked at Dumbledore as if he were mad. He wanted to shout at him. "You're really off you're rocker. What do you mean my son?"

"Exactly what I said, You're son. But you're right Severus, you need some rest, go to sleep but I expect you here, once you awake. There's a mild sleeping draught on my desk. Goodnight." And with a snap of his fingers Dumbledore vanished in thin air.

Severus grabbed the sleeping draught off of Albus' desk and headed towards his private chambers. "*Mental that one, he really is off his rocker. My son, I'd die before Harry Potter was my son.*" He thought to himself.

## Chapter 6

It was later in the day that Severus Snape had found himself in the Headmasters office.

"Sit, Severus." Snape sat down obligingly. "Would you like a lemon drop?" Dumbledore asked the man sitting before him.

Snape declined with a sharp glance at the old man. He had not had a restful sleep, as he would have liked. True he took the dreamless sleep potion, but it still did not help. Not when Albus' last sentence kept playing over and over again in his head. Harry Potter was apparently his son, but that did not make any sense.

"So Albus do you plan on telling me what you meant about Potter being my son?" He stared at the man through black slits in his eyes.

Albus looked at Severus carefully and examined his face. He was hoping for a different reaction from the potions professor, when he told him about Harry. "Yes and No, Severus." He considered that as his options.

"What do you mean Yes and No? Tell me. You have wasted enough of my time, both you and that Potter Brat."

"Then I guess it will be a no Severus, but I must say that I will be sorry for what I'm going to have to do to you." Albus' eyes were dull and had been filled with deep regret as he pulled out his wand.

"OBLIV..." The last part of the word was not finished, when he felt a spell hit him squarely in his chest.

Albus' wand flew out of his hand and landed in the outstretched palm of Severus'.

"You were always faster than me, but thank you Severus you just proved me wrong." An amused smile traced along Dumbledore's face.

Snape pointed his wand at the man he considered neither friend nor foe. "You will tell me what is going on, or else."

Dumbledore considered the man before him. He knew Severus too well, the threats that he was making was just that a threat. He knew that he would not do anything to him, after all that he had done for the other man.

"I must ask you one more time Severus before I explain. What are your true feelings towards Mr. Potter?"

"I despise him. He's just like his father, arrogant and self –righteous. Thinks he owns the bloody school."

"But he has done nothing towards you, are you sure that there are no other feelings for him, because deep down I do believe that you remember everything."

"Remember what? There's nothing to remember." This time instead of his usual sneer, Snape was frustrated. "I don't have time for these games right now, Albus. And I take it neither do you, as I recall you have to deal with Harry's relatives, do you not?"

"I do," Came the reply, " But this is much more important, besides his uncle is going nowhere, and nobody is allowed to enter or exit the house. So we have time." The last sentence was a command more than anything.

"SO BLOODY WELL SAY IT."

"All right, Severus I will tell you, but you may not agree or understand what is going on right now and all that I ask of you is to believe me in everything that I'm going to reveal to you."

"I'll try my best." Snape sat down once more on the chair and waited for the headmaster to continue. He hated being left in the dark, and he was not a very patient person to begin with either.

He let Albus Dumbledore to explain everything to him, and how he could be Harry's father, which he found to be the most puzzling thing to him when he had never slept with Lily Evans. True he had fancied her, but he kept that secret to himself, he knew that James wanted her, and he could not stand being tortured anymore by the so called "Marauders" so he left her be.



“Do you remember the day when Lily and James were killed?” Albus continued

“How could I forget, everybody remembers that day.” He sneered, which almost turned into a laugh, but he vowed never to show that emotion, his family always considered laughter a weakness.

“I’m talking about the day, not the night.”

“You know perfectly well I don’t remember anything that had happened back then.”

“Right sorry.” Albus smiled apologetically.

Severus could not remember anything that happened from the time that he was seventeen to the time that he was twenty. It was like his whole mind had erased those three years. It was the Headmaster who filled in the blanks, and told Severus that he was hit by a stray curse during a death eater raid, and for some reason he lost all his memories from those years. The last thing Severus did remember was hearing the news that Lily and James had died, while he was sitting in Dumbledore’s office.

He waited for the old man to continue.

“Since you don’t remember, I’ll put it to you bluntly, James. Severus is dead and has been for the last fifteen and a half years.”

“Oh is that all, but it still does not explain how I’m Potter’s father.”

“Maybe you did not hear me correctly James. Severus is dead, and the reason why you can not remember is because you have been living someone else’s life for the past sixteen years, through a switch in memories, that are not your own.”

“Wait a second.” Severus growled. “Do my ears deceive me or have you just called me James. WHAT’S GOING ON DUMBLEDORE?” He yelled.

“You heard me correctly.” He nodded sadly. “You see, in your or shall I say Severus’ fifteenth year he decided to stop being a death eater,

two years in and his young mind could not take anymore. I allowed him back, but as a spy, in order to gain information that would help in defeating Voldemort once and for all. You, Lily, and Severus became good friends when he joined the Order; he became the fifth marauder, if I clearly remember. The first few weeks your friendship was rocky, but then later on it grew strong. So strong that when we learned there was a traitor in our midst that sold you to Voldemort, Severus agreed to switch places with you, because he thought that he'd be able to take on Voldemort himself, and no innocent person would have to end up dying. The idea was presented to you, and you being who you are flatly refused the offer. In the end we were able to persuade your decision, though rather forcefully than I would have liked. Lily was informed the day before and knew that you would be safe and Severus would be coming home to her. It was so perfect. Voldemort would still have "Severus", and there would be a "James" present as to not add any suspicions. Then the night came and well everything ended up, as you know, in total disaster."

"And why did we have to switch memories, why couldn't I just keep mine in place?"

"Why? Because we thought that this trick would defeat Voldemort. And in order to do that, it would be easier if the person who went up against him knew him better than anyone in the Order. So Severus was the best person, and since you were the target, I'm sorry to say this James I made you into a guinea pig."

"If what you're saying is true how come I can't remember any of this?" He asked.

"The reason that you can't remember any of this is because I had to strip you of all your memories, when you and Severus made the switch. All of your memories I placed in a pensieve, where when the time came could easily be transferred back to you. I then duplicated all of Severus' memories and placed them into you. I gave you all of his memories up until the time he joined the order, but was already willing to give up the dark side. That was later explained to you as a death eater raid gone bad. Severus was a different story. He was able to keep his memories, because of his skills with legilemency we duplicated some of your memories and placed them into him just in

case Voldemort was able to break down the mind barrier, and if he did so successfully, all he would see would be different images of Harry, Lily, and yourself.”

“Why am I still Severus, why haven’t I changed back to myself?”

“I’m not one hundred percent sure, but my theory is that you don’t know how to change back into yourself without your memories.”

“What do you mean?”

“You are a metamorphamagus James, and that’s how you made the switch with Severus, while Severus used the polyjuice potion he had enough of the supply to last him a good few weeks if need be. However, I am getting off topic let me continue with what I was saying. I believe that your ability to change back was hampered when your memories were taken away from you. It was fine at first because I thought that it would only be for a couple of days at the most, and then you would get your memories back and switch into your body once more. I, however, have been mistaken, because of the events that took place; I decided that it was best to leave you as Severus for a while. I needed him more than you, for I still feared that Voldemort would return and a spy would be needed for the light.”

“You used me?” James growled. “What about my life, what about Harry? Did you ever think that things could have been different if I was there, he would have never had to deal with the things that have happened? YOU ARE A SELFISH OLD MAN.”

“You will not talk to me that way James.” Dumbledore stood up and puffed out his chest, trying to be more intimidating, he knew the younger man would be angry and it hurt him to see how much it showed in his dark black eyes.

“I have every right to be upset, you stole everything from me. EVERYTHING.”

Now it was Dumbledore’s turn to get angry. “I did not take everything away from you. I kept Harry at his aunt and uncle’s where I thought he would be safe, and at the same time you two still were able to see

each other during the school year. And here you still were able to protect him, and keep him safe. You were still the father to him.”

“We hated each other, Albus. You could have told me. And right now if all you have said is true, and you’ve been lying to me all these years, how am I to be sure you’re not lying to me now?” He smiled knowing that he had just won something that the old man couldn’t argue with.

"You can't." He said sadly. "I'm sorry James."

“Until you show me proof, I AM SEVERUS.”

"I have the pensieve still, we could do the switch now, if you like."

Severus stood up, finishing what Dumbledore started. "You want to know what I would like to do right now. I want to be left alone, and if you even come near an inch of me I will hex you into Merlin knows where," He placed his hands on the desk threateningly, and leaned over towards the old man. "And if you so much as go near the hospital wing I will kill you, and make it as painful as possible." And with that he walked out of the office his robes billowing more dangerously than they ever had in his life.

Dumbledore just gazed back at the man's receding back, stroking Fawkes' soft feathers. "I did what was best for everybody, and in time he will come around."

The phoenix just trilled sadly and a soft tear sprung to his eyes, for he knew that his beloved master had done something that could never be fixed.

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Severus Snape made his way into his private chambers. After the conversation that he just had he felt sick. He did not know what to believe, and he did not want to believe that his whole life had been a lie.

He made his way into his huge bathroom, and fell sick in his toilet. He lay curled on the cold linoleum flooring as his thoughts took over trying to make sense with what just happened.

*"No, no, no. It can't be true. He's lying, he's a lying old codger. But then why would he make something like that up? He's never lied to anyone or anything before, why now? This can't be happening. Please say it's not happening."* He asked aloud to no one in particular.

The memory of the morning kept flooding his brain over and over again replaying out the scene of what just took place.

For the first time in Severus' life he found himself crying uncontrollably. Even when his parents argued and fought in front of him he never cried, and even when his father beat him he never cried. Crying was for the weak, and he was not, that was how he became his sardonical self.

This time, however, he found that he was not crying for himself, but for his family that he lost; Lily, Sirius, Severus, everyone that he held dear. He cried for Harry for all the lies, and missed times that he could have had a father, and someone to depend on, he cried for what his son had to endure through the last fifteen and a half years. For deep down he knew that Albus was telling him the truth, he felt it in his soul.

The man that looked like Severus gave out a long low pain filled wail that was a half cry half laugh. He was filled with so much confusion and pain that he could not do anything else.

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The teenagers who had been sitting in silence for what seemed like hours in the infirmary, all gave a startled jump when they heard the wailing that came from what sounded like the dungeons. To all the ears it sounded like a man was being tortured.

"Wonder what that is." George stated as he examined Fred who was sitting next to him, as if he were the one to make that awful noise.

"Don't look at me I'm sitting right here."

"Maybe we should check it out." Hermione stood up.

"Mione, just stay, whoever, or whatever is in that state probably doesn't want to be bothered." Ron grabbed Hermione's wrist and pulled her into his lap. He held her close to him, and Hermione snuggled deep down into his chest.

All five people in the room went back to their own little world in their minds. Every now and then they all would stop and take a hopeful glance at the pale and broken figure lying down on the bed. Hoping that he would wake up soon.

For the past three hours Harry would let little moans escape from his pale mouth. Madame Pomfrey already told them that Harry could move and even make noise, in his comatose state, but it did not mean that he would come out of the coma anytime soon.

"Want to play exploding snap?" Fred said to no one in general he just wanted to break the silence, and the foreboding mood, that lingered in the air around them.

"How can you want to play now?" Ginny cried and ran out of the room.

Ginny made it to the exit of the infirmary, but bumped into an angry, and dishevelled Snape. She bounced off of him and fell to the hard stone floor.

"Ohh, Professor, I'm sorry." Ginny exclaimed picking herself up from the floor and cleaning the dust from her clothes.

"hmm?" He seemed lost.

This scared Ginny she had never seen her professor this way. This was even scarier to her than the time she had accidentally caused a big explosion in the potions classroom during her second year. Snape had been so angry with her, she had to spend three weeks in detention cleaning the mess she made. Now it seemed that he did not even know who or where he was.

"Is everything ok?" She asked him, genuine concern filled her voice.

"It's none of your business, Ms. Weasley. And if you don't want to lose twenty points for your house before school even starts, I suggest you go to the library, or anyplace away from here, the rest will join you shortly."

Ginny ran away in fright, she did not even know it was possible to lose points in the summer. She did not want to risk it, so she ran, and took Snape's advice and headed to the library, waiting for her brothers and Hermione to join her. She sat at a table, and picked up a book to read. She was happy Madame Pince was not there; she could not handle dealing with any questions that the old witch would ask her.

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James felt much better after he let out that long wail, but he still had many thoughts going through his mind. The main one was that he needed to see Harry and desperately. He did not want to waste any more time away from his son.

*"His son. Harry's my son. Mine."* That is what was going through his mind when he heard Ginny Weasley apologizing to him; he had no idea what for, but he sent her away.

James felt bad about the way he acted, but he wanted some time to Harry alone. His friends had had him for six years and so now it was his turn. He was quite proud of Harry choosing such good and loyal friends.

He made his way into the room and all the faces had the same expression that Ginny wore, one of pure fright.

"I believe Ms. Weasley is in the library waiting for you to join her. GO NOW. You need to eat anyways, so go to the great hall and have some dinner I need to be with Harry alone."

"You can't tell us what to do." George said once more defiantly.

"I can and I just did. Do not make me use that spell that I used on the two of you the last time you tried to defy me. I'm sure Ms. Granger and young Mr. Weasley would not appreciate being thrown out."

"Lets go." Fred said. "I'm actually feeling hungry."

"Me too." Rang the chorus of three other voices. Clearly wanting to get away as fast as possible, by the urgency in their tone of voices.

The young visitors all got up and went to seek out Ginny to eat some lunch.

When there was nobody left in the room, James picked up his weightless son and held him close to his chest.

"Oh Harry. I'm so sorry, if I had only known I could have protected you." Tears once more found their way across the face that did not belong to him. He brushed them back still holding his small son.

"The Dursley's will pay. Tonight. Don't you worry. But first I want to see you open your eyes. C'mon Harry, open your eyes, for me, your father."

But Harry did not move, he lay motionless in his father's arms, as if nothing had changed. He was unaware that he even had his father again.

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The sight that met Albus Dumbledore's eyes when he entered the infirmary was one that was earth shattering. A son cradled in his fathers arms as if he were two.

He had made a very big mistake and wanted to make it right again. The father was not yet the right person. True he realized that the boy was his son, but he still did not have any of his memories or appearance of the person that he once was.

Holding a deep plastered bowl in his withered hands he made his way to the man.

James had felt the old mans presence as he entered the room. He took a tighter grip on Harry not wanting to lose his son, when he had just found him after many years.



"I already told you that you are not welcome here. Stay away from me and Harry." James spat and if possible clung to Harry even harder, almost possessively.

"James, I came to offer you what you asked for, proof." He held out his offering.

James gave a wary glance towards the bowl that Dumbledore held out to him. Forgetting that he told Dumbledore not to call him that name, until he had proof.

James glanced at the liquid in the bowl it danced almost teasingly encouraging him to dip a finger inside, to feel its coolness, and to reclaim what he lost and was rightfully his.

James was still sceptical of the man standing before him, as much as he wanted to he could not trust Albus anymore, with anything. "How do I know that it's not a trick, another one of your lies? How do I know that if I do look at the contents Severus' memories won't get erased either, so that I'll be left like a criminal in Azkaban after the Dementor's kiss, an empty shell with no sense of who I am."

"You will have to trust me." He looked gravely at the man before him.

James held Harry close to him. "I wish you would wake, this would be a hell of a lot easier." He whispered to the silent boy.

"James be reasonable why would I tell you and then take it all away again. I admit to making a mistake, but I refuse to make another one."

"Alright, but after I see what's inside and get all my memories back, do not go near me or Harry again. You're relationship will end, you will be nothing more to Harry than a headmaster."

"I'm sorry James I can not agree to that. It is not my decision to make, it is Harry's and I will not deprive him of the relationship that we have, if he wants it."

"Then I'll pull him out of Hogwarts. He could go to Beauxbatons instead. Don't like them, but I know Madame Maxime will honour my wishes, and she would never hurt my son."

“James. Please do not do this.” Albus begged. He felt so old and so lost. He knew he lost James who he considered a son to him; he did not want to lose Harry, whom he considered a grandson.

“I WILL DO WHAT I PLEASE, HE’S MY SON. STOP MAKING DECISIONS THAT REGARD MY FAMILY, BEFORE CONSULTING WITH ME FIRST.” He screamed.

“Alright.” Albus caved.

This seemed to calm down the angry potions master. And he settled himself down stroking Harry’s hair through his fingers.

Albus held out the pensieve once more to James. This time he took it from the outstretched hands. He placed Harry gently down on the hospital bed, and placed a finger into the memories.

He felt himself falling and landing into familiar territory.

The ceiling in the great hall was littered with stars that caressed the blackness of the night sky; it was a picture of absolute beauty.

James' heaved a sigh of contentment. He had no idea why he would find this picture satisfying, but nonetheless he did.

The great hall of Hogwarts was starting to fill up with a mass of black robed students all talking excitedly.

"Ahh it's the first day of school." He thought out loud. He looked at the Gryffindor table instinctively hoping to get a glimpse of himself.

The students diverged amongst the four-house tables, ready for the feast that would take place once the sorting was done. A few late stragglers entered the room, but still there was no sign of him or in fact anybody else he was friends with.

"Where am I?" James pondered. "Dumbledore must be up to his old tricks, I can't believe I fell for that lie, this is probably his pensieve that I'm in." He tilted his head up to the head table and when he spotted the person that he was looking for mouthed the words I hate you.

The man that he mouthed the words to did not seem to acknowledge him in the slightest. He seemed almost as if he were in his own world.

"I HATE YOU!" This time James shouted it at Dumbledore, and it felt good. He liked being in the pensieve where you could do or say anything and nobody would pay the slightest bit of mind to the new person in the room.

"I HATE YOU, I HATE YOU, I HATE YOU, I HATE YOU!" Over and Over James kept repeating the words feeling better with every shout that came out of his mouth. He did not notice that everything was still and silent, and it was only his voice that rang throughout his ears.

Everybody's eyes were transfixed on the double doors that led into the entranceway of Hogwarts. It slowly opened to reveal a thirty odd year old Professor McGonagall, leading a long line of scared looking first years.

His stomach clenched as he noticed three boys near the front of the line, and a redheaded girl right beside them. Remus Lupin, Sirius Black, James Potter, and Lily Evans, and further behind near the back of the room was an almost exact replica of the man that he was now, Severus Snape.

The first year students trudged up to the teacher's table in front of everyone, they all looked apprehensively at the stool and the sorting hat and the sorting hat that was sitting on top it, waiting for Professor McGonagall to start the roll call so they could be sorted into their houses.

He watched the three marauders observantly. James took in the pensieve James. He looked just like James now remembered. Unruly hair that fell almost down to his intense brown eyes, a muscular body that would be great for quidditch, he was short enough to be the great seeker that he would turn out to be, and his aura exuded arrogance.

"This still doesn't seem right." He said to himself, waiting and watching to see what would happen.

The pensieve James now noticed the young redheaded girl that was beside him. He whispered something into Sirius' ear, it was so quiet that nobody could hear, not even Sirius, who seemed baffled at first, and then broke into a huge grin. Sirius nodded his head enthusiastically.

"Hey Evans." He heard pensieve James shout.

"What do you want, now?" Lily sighed warily.

"Catch." Pensieve James threw something at her, and she let out a loud shriek, and threw the thing in her hand in the air.

James saw what his younger self gave her it was a live mouse. An eruption of laughter echoed through the great hall as people laughed at the new girls shriek of terror. James felt sorry for her; he wished his younger self was not conceited. "So this is why she probably did not start liking James until her seventh year. Oh well, he, I mean I deserved it."

The young girl, whose eyes shone with tears, was suddenly turning a dark shade of red. "POTTER, HOW DARE YOU! WAIT UNTIL I WRITE TO YOUR PARENTS!"

This time more laughter rang through the hall, as they all watched the young boy being yelled at. James could not help laughing along with them, he, after all deserved it.

“Ahh, Evans, you’re still sore about the whole lake thing right? At the cottage?”

“Why what happened at the cottage?” Sirius laughed.

“THAT is none of your business, Black.” She marched closer to the head table, ignoring the sniggering coming from behind her.

“So what did happen mate?” Sirius asked again to pensieve James.

“Well, my parents and her parents rented a cottage this summer and when we got there...”

James did not find out what happened when they got there because the next instant flashes started appearing before his eyes. And the scene changed into something new.

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This time James did nothing, but stand in the corner observing the vision that surrounded him.

“We will all come to order.” The man in the purple robes rasped out, as he looked down in a crowd of about two hundred people. “Today I bring some good news with me. It appears that we finally have one up against Voldemort.”

“DON’T say that name!” Someone in the background hissed at Albus Dumbledore.

“I apologize, but this is absurd. You are fighting a man yet you fear his name. His name is nothing to fear and soon he will meet his downfall.”

All the members of the order looked around anxiously at one another, anticipating how the Dark Lord could be defeated, and soon. It was a little hard for them to believe that there was away.

Some of the Order members snorted with laughter, others were whispering in hushed voices. News like this was very rare and usually was not so grand as the demise of the Dark Lord.

“So Albus what is your secret weapon that will destroy you – know – who?” Frank Longbottom called from across the room.

Albus rolled his eyes. He finally learned that no matter how much preaching he could do there was no way that the Order members would use Voldemort’s name.

“A spy.” He claimed clearly so everyone would hear.

This announcement brought a new wave of chaotic noise throughout the cramped room.

As people were shouting, arguing, and lost in their own thoughts they did not notice that man that was entering the room. The man was wearing dark robes and they billowed as he went to stand beside Dumbledore. His face was dark and his greasy hair ran down his face menacingly.

However there was one person in the room that seemed to notice the stranger’s appearance. “What in Merlin’s name is he doing here?” James bellowed with a look of pure disgust written all over his face.

Everyone in the room went silent from that shout, now it seemed that they all looked at the new member of the Order of the Phoenix.

Severus Snape studied James Potter matching his expression for one of disgust as each glared against one another.

“That ugly git is a death eater.” Sirius interrupted the silence. “He can’t be trusted Albus.”

“I am aware of his station, thank you Sirius. And yes he can be trusted. I have spoken with him and he is very willing to help our cause.”

“How can you believe him?” Remus asked quietly. He was not going to act like his friends were doing. He considered Snape carefully, and made up his mind. He agreed with his friends that this man could not be trusted.

“I have a reason for everything. I have a reason for everything that I do, and mine and his reason does not concern any of you. It is between Severus and me. I expect you to treat him like any other member and do not tell anyone about this. I need it kept quiet so long as Voldemort does not hear. Is this understood?”

Two hundred people nodded their assent to their leader.

“Fine then this meeting is adjourned.”

“Why don’t we invite Malfoy next time. Make the Order known to all Death Eaters.”

“Mr. Black, I heard that.” Dumbledore said reaching the three men along with Severus. “Please try to put your differences aside and learn to trust each other. Severus is going to be playing a crucial part for us that could eventually bring on his own death. Consider that before you all make assumptions.”

“Fine.” Sirius mumbled.

“Now why don’t we all shake hands, like civil grown men would do?” Dumbledore smirked.

James, Sirius, Remus, and Severus shook hands not knowing that it was going to bond them to a very strong friendship until they met their untimely deaths.





All Peter knew was that Severus was acting as a double agent on behalf of the Dark Lords orders; he had missed the introduction meeting of Severus' into the order.

Sirius and the medi – witch came back into the room holding a small bundle in her arms, she presented it to the mother in waiting. "It was a close call. Mrs. Potter, but you're son is a strong fighter."

Lily hugged her new son close to her. She smiled as she pulled the blankets away from his face and kissed the top of his head. The new baby hair was fine, and soft like silk. He was precious.

"He looks like James." Sirius said.

"With one exception." Severus butted in. "He has Lily's eyes."

They all looked at the new baby boy. He was truly a miracle, he came out with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck, and almost did not survive due to suffocation and now here he was yawning and trying to open his eyes up. He did not succeed, his tiny face just scrunched up in frustration and he fell asleep listening to the soothing voices that went on all around him.

"Hey did you two choose a name for him yet?" Peter asked, trying to get into an excited mood. He found it very difficult to say the least.

"I wanted to call him Sirepese." James stated seriously.

"You're joking right? Tell me you're joking." Sirius said through laughter, rolling on the floor and clutching his stomach.

"I am serious."

"No I am Sirius, you're nuts, if you're going to call your son that."

"It is the first two letters in all of your names, I thought it would be nice."

"Don't worry. I told him if we named him that then I would divorce him within a second." Lily looked amused and horrified at the idea of her son being named Sirepese. "I mean it's not even a name."

“So what are you guys going to name him?” Severus asked again, curiosity getting the better of him.

Lily spoke quietly and shyly, she knew what she wanted to call her son, the moment that the medi – witch brought him back to her. “I want to call him Harry.”

“Why Harry?” Remus asked her.

“Because I have a feeling he is going to be a powerful man one day, and Harry means protector and power. My son already fought for his life, and I know he’s going to do something great one day.”

“Alright Lily if that’s what you want to call him. We’ll name him Harry. Happy Birthday Harry Potter.” James also leaned down and kissed his son on his small cheek.

“That doesn’t seem right. Harry Potter seems like it’s missing something. I want to add James as his middle name after your father. Harry James Potter. Perfect in everyway.”

Harry gurgled in his mother’s arms as if in consent with his name. Everybody laughed, except for Peter.

“Sorry can’t stay, got to go do something for Dumbledore and the Order.” Peter got up from his chair made his goodbyes and left the room.

“He’s been acting weird lately.” Sirius said taking the small bundle from it’s sleeping mother.

“Ignore him, he’s always been a bit jittery. Maybe he’s got a new lady friend.” James laughed and looked down at his son.

“Hey James. He’s all yours mate.” Sirius passed Harry off to his father.

“Why I thought you liked him.” James teased Sirius.

“Oh I do, but not when he poops.” Sirius grinned a toothy grin, and looked at the shocked expression on his friends face.

“What do I do? I’ve never changed a diaper before.”

“There’s always a first for everything.” Remus said.

“Oh give him here.” Lily cried, she once again took her baby and changed his diapers.

“Oh Sirius, we were wondering if you would do us the honour of becoming Harry’s Godfather?” James asked his friend.

“Are you kidding I would love to.” He jumped up and down in his seat.  
“You’re son is going to be so spoiled.”

“Hey congrats Sirius.” Remus said down heartened. He knew that Sirius and James were closer, but it was still a slap to his face.

“Hey Rem, me and Lily were wondering as well if you and Severus would like to be honorary Godfathers to Harry. I know we can only name one, but we’d like it if you guys would stand for Harry as well.”

“If I can’t be first I would love to be second.”

“Who says you get to be second?” Severus drawled, scowling.

“Because I’ve been his friend longer than you.”

“Hey all three of you are equal, we could not decide so it would be Sirius’ name down as Harry’s Godfather, but all in all all three of you would be equals.”

”Agreed.” They said simultaneously.

“What about Peter?” Remus asked, remembering the lumpy boy they considered a friend.

“Truth be told, you were right the first time. He has been acting weird, lately. And for the first time I just want this between the three of you.”

James felt the rush as the vision once more slipped from his view, and proceeded onto another one.

The last memory left him angry and worried. Angry because he could not warn those people in the room of Pettigrew's betrayal, and worried for every single one of those lives. Out of all of them there was only Himself, Remus, and Harry their protector left, and who knew how long the rest would remain alive.

“Do I even get a say in this?” An angry voice shouted out.

“How can this not concern me? You’ve just told me Voldemort has found out about our hiding place, and now he’s after Harry, Lily, and myself. Albus, help me out here, please.” He begged.

“Lily has already agreed to it Albus. I have told her and she said as long as we are careful and none of us would get hurt she’d be willing to go along.”

"I have never been more sure about anything in my life. Sir."

“I said no. I flatly refuse to do this. I am not going to risk Severus’ life for mine. We can set up the fidelius charm again.”

“No we can’t there is not enough time to do it. This will be easier.”

"You can not go against me. I WON'T DO IT! ABSOLUTELY NOT!"

"Stupefy." Dumbledore said the words, and James' stiff body hit the floor.

"Get him up onto the chair and restrain him. We don't want him to be able to move when we do this."

Severus lifted his friend up from the floor and placed him gently onto the chair that faced the headmaster's desk. He placed unreleasable ropes on his arms and legs so that James could not move, when he woke up.

"Ready, Severus?"

"Ready." He said shakily.

"Good luck then. Enervate."

James woke up startled. His chair tipped backwards and he fell. He realized that he could not move. His arms and legs were tied tightly and bounded by magic. "LET ME GO!" He snarled at them both.

Severus rushed to pick up his fallen friend from the floor. "I'm truly sorry James, but we have no other way. When this is all over you will forgive me."

"Over my dead body." He cried. "I need to go back, I have to protect my family." He tried pleading again, the only thing he could do, in his situation. "Please Albus, just let me go. I need to get to Lily and Harry."

"James I already said no, and Lily has already agreed. Why are you making this harder on yourself?" Dumbledore tried to comfort the younger man. "It will hurt for a minute, but then you soon won't remember anything. Once this is all over you will get all of your memories back, and so will Severus and you will get on with your life."

James could not respond he knew he was defeated. He hung his head low the shame of betrayal that he felt and his ineffective efforts

to protect his family as he was being held against his will in a chair was unbearable.

"I need you to change into Severus for me James."

"No" He said softly but stubbornly.

"You can do it the easy way or the hard way. It is your choice."

"What's the hard way?"

"I could use the imperious curse, and that would hurt far worse than you're pride is feeling now."

"Do it." He challenged.

Albus felt lost he did not want to harm the person he cared for, but James was not giving him any options. "Imperio." He cried.

James' body went lax and his eyes glazed over from the curse. He heard in his head a voice telling him to use his metamorphmagus powers to transform into Severus Snape. "Why do I want to do that?" He questioned the voice in his head.

The commanding voice in his head spoke up. "It will help to save your family in these dark times. Now don't question me anymore and change."

"Alright." The voice was too strong to argue with and he figured that if he wanted his family to survive then he would do what the voice was telling him to do.

James scrunched up his nose and his short hair became longer and greasy. His round eyes became slits, his nose pointier, his mouth thinner, and his face more rigid and sunken. His body became taller and bigger, and his hands and feet grew to match the new body.

"Wow." Severus exclaimed, as the transformation was complete. "An exact replica of myself. Pretty neat." He grinned.

“Finite Incantantum.” Dumbledore released the spell off of James, but then realized that it would have been better to leave it on him.

“Happy now.” He snarled. “You know I could just undo my transformation very easily.”

“You won’t.” Dumbledore said. “Otherwise I won’t let you be awake for the switching of the memories.”

“Fine, just get it over with.”

Severus leant down in front of his friend looked him in the eye and gave him a hug. “I am sorry for this my friend, I just want all of us to be safe and this is the only way that I know it will work.”

James just pushed his face away from the one he felt had betrayed him. For the three years that they were friends he had never felt so much hatred for this man.

“Alright.” Dumbledore said. “Let’s get this over with. James I’m leaving you with only a few subtle memories of Harry and Lily in your mind, you won’t remember them, but you won’t feel like killing them or hurting them if you should bypass them in the streets. I am then going to replace the lost memories with memories of Severus’ up until he joined the order. Ready?”

“It’s not like I have much of a choice, Do I?.” He said trying to shrug his shoulders through the ropes that were binding him to the chair. The ropes expanded when he changed into Severus, but it still did not give him any leeway.

“Severus you may want to hold onto his head, so he can’t move it, I expect it to be extremely painful as his memories are taken from him.”

“Yes sir.” Severus held onto James’ head to keep him still.

Dumbledore pointed his wand at the restrained James. He carefully aimed it at the heart of his forehead, the place where memories were kept.

All around the room different images flooded everybody's vision. James' childhood, his school years at Hogwarts, everything even up to this moment in time, until it all ended and landed into the marble bowl of the pensieve.

During this time James let out a howl of pain as all his memories were taken from him. When it was all finished he had no sense of who he was or where he was, he felt lost, empty, and all alone. He had a vague recollection of a few things that happened in his life, but they were small, and seemed very insignificant at that point.

"How do you feel?" Dumbledore questioned him gently.

"I don't know." He answered, which was the truth. "Right now I don't know anything."

"That's understandable for what you've just been through." He looked down at James through sad eyes.

"You are going to feel pain once more. It may last a little bit longer than the last time, but I assure you it will go away."

"No, I don't think I like this anymore, I just want to go home. By the way do you know where home is?" James was confused. "Yes I'd like to go home now. Please just let me go home."

"You will son, very soon. But you must let me do to you what I have to do in order for you to go home."

"No, I want to go home."

Dumbledore ignored him this time, even though James kept repeating the sentence over and over again. He picked up another pensieve and pointed his wand once more at James' head. This time new images of Severus Snape shadowed everyone's visions, and this time it sunk itself deeply into James' head.

James let out another wail of pain, he felt like his whole head was being ripped apart. He just wanted to go home, he could not understand why the two people in the room insisted on hurting him to no end. That's when he lost consciousness.



"Severus you must take the polyjuice potion now before he wakes up."

"Yes, Sir." Severus pulled out a vial of the dark dense liquid, and drank it within one gulp. The memories of James that was inside of him was done before they had taken the sleeping man from his work.

Within minutes he had changed into James. He had enough of the potion in stock that would last him for a couple of months if need be.

Now they both waited for the unconscious man to wake up.

When the new Snape finally did, he was confused; he could not remember why he was here in the headmaster's office of all the places.

"Severus." Dumbledore spoke quietly, helping the man to his feet.

"Why am I here?" He asked suspiciously.

"We saved you from a Death Eater raid gone bad."

"And why can't I remember any of this, then?" He sneered.

"Because some of your memories were obliterated. But you do remember being a spy for our side, right."

"Vaguely." He responded. He did remember wanting to come to Dumbledore to help him out to leave the Death Eater's, but he could not remember coming to him and being a spy. "If you say that I did, then I guess I did, otherwise how would you have known."

"That's a boy. Now James here is going to explain..."

"I don't want him here, Dumbledore, if you want me to spy, then I suggest you make him leave. Otherwise our arrangement is over. Now if you don't mind, I think I'm going to go to my private chambers for a long quiet bath." With that he left the room.



Back in the hospital wing James scrunched up his face, and his greasy long hair became short hair. His sunken shallow face became fuller, his slit eyes became round, his lips became thicker, and his nose became smaller. His body became shorter and less stockier, and his hands and feet returned to normal size.

He went to the washroom and took a good long look at his reflection. He was James Potter and he was back.

James smiled to his reflection in the mirror. "My you are a GOD." He praised his reflection. "No wonder why Lily couldn't take her eyes off of you." He laughed. His reflection laughed back with him. At the memory of Lily his heart began to throb in pain. He missed her more than anything in the world. "If only I had been the one to die, than Lily could have been here. Why didn't she switch places with someone else." His reflection just stared back not giving any reply, it looked lost and clueless. He knew that was not right, because if Lily had switched than some other innocent person would have died. "But I do have my boy." The most precious gift she could have given him, a beautiful, brilliant, boy, Harry. "Mine." He said wistfully.

His pupils retracted with fury. Yes, Harry was his, all broken, battered and bruised. His paternal instincts clicked into place along with that of the marauders. The marauders were always there for one another through thick and thin, and if anybody had even dared to threaten one that person would know pain beyond imagining. He could not wait to administer some of that on Harry's Uncle.

James had met Vernon twice and both times were at each others wedding, he had never liked the man much, but to show good manners he had always been civil to the other man, he had no idea why he would act that way towards his son.

Fury rose deep within him, now knowing the perfect revenge he put the first part into action. Being a metamorphamagus had its ups. James retransformed into Severus Snape, he was first going to show Dursley what fear could mean, and an angry Snape was a scary Snape. He had seen his friend angry and it was not a pretty picture. Then he was going to show him pain, pain beyond anything that man had ever felt before, and he was going to love every minute of administering it to him.

He strode out of the washroom and over to Harry's bedside. "I'll be back soon son. I promise." He pulled the covers tight around the boys thin frame, and with difficulty turned his back on the small form. "I'm not leaving you." He whispered as he left the infirmary.

James walked out of the castle and beyond the gates of Hogwarts entranceway. When he was a safe distance, he disappeared to Little Whinging, Surrey.

From the hospital wing nobody noticed the broken boy as he stirred vigorously in the sheets, for the first time in days.

[illegible]

Vernon Dursley was still huddled on his bed from the shock of what had happened to him days before. He had not even bothered to eat or drink, and the lack of nutrients and worry from the intimidating wizards made him lose weight. He had lost over twenty pounds mostly from shivering on his bed. They won, and he had ended up the loser, he did not know how it had happened.

That was when he decided he was not going to be the victim anymore. He would be ready for them when they came, and he would get Harry back after all. He only wanted Harry, because he was great for relieving all his tension, a few kicks here, and a few punches there, and everything in the world would be right again, after all that boy had put him through the last year, he belonged at the Dursley's.

He got up from his sweat-stained bed, and showered. He dressed in perfectly normal clothing, and went downstairs to eat a proper meal. He was famished.

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“So this is where Harry lived.” James thought disgustedly. At first he wondered if this was the right house because there was no indication that two boys lived there. There were only pictures of a pig like person wearing a wig. Then he heard descending footsteps coming from the stairwells, and he recognized the man he had met only twice before.

Anger bubbled inside of him, nothing would have given him more satisfaction then casting the Avada Kedavra curse on him, nevertheless he did know some curses that were not classified as an

unforgivable, but it would cause a great amount of suffering for the person on the other end of the wand.

Vernon Dursley blanched at the man holding the wand. He was frightened by this man, more than when the redheaded boy had cast that wretched spell on him.

He did not know why the man dressed in black was there, he had never seen him before in his life, and if he had then Vernon would have hightailed it right away.

“Who are you and what are you doing in my house? We do not allow freaks here.” He said in a strong clear voice that covered up his true feelings.

“I just came here to see the man that dared to touch my son. And now that I have you are nothing more than a bloody codfish.”

“Excuse me sir, you come here insulting me and I have never met your son, I think you’ve mistaken me for someone else, in fact I have never even met you.” Vernon was clearly confused, apparently there was some sort of mix up, the only boy he had ever touched was Harry, and Harry’s father was dead.

James twirled the wand in his hand. Staring dauntingly over at the sordid man, he smirked at him. “Sorry forgot to introduce myself.” His voice was silky, but threatening at the same time. It was the same one that he used on his first years potion students, to put fear into them.

It apparently worked on Dursley, he stood backside to the banister and he was shaking so hard that it looked like it was going to fall off the steps.

James smirked again (this time the banister did come off), he scrunched up his nose and transformed into an older version of his son, minus the sparkling emerald green eyes.

Vernon looked on the edge of fainting. His nephew had played him, “Potter?” He questioned.

“Yes.” James replied coolly. He knew what that fool was thinking, and had a hard time trying to suppress his laughter. He wanted to find out what the man would do to him. His opinions of using muggles as sport changed quite quickly when he wanted nothing more than to use the stupid man as a quaffle, and throw him into the hoops.

“Change back to your self right now, then go to your cupboard, I’ll deal with you later.” The dim-witted man pointed a finger and waited for “Harry” to follow his orders.

James could not hold in his laughter any longer it amused him so much to see Dursley trying to rack his brain about the whole thing. His laughter exploded through him, and it echoed around the house.

Vernon was outraged, he lunged for the look alike Harry, but was knocked off the floor when his knee came into contact with heavy black boots.

“Allow me to finally introduce myself. I am and always have been James Potter.”

Vernon stared dumbfounded at the man for several minutes. “It can’t be, you’re dead.”

“Well surprise I’m back.” He gloated.

The expression on Vernon’s face was priceless. He had turned blue and started choking on what James could only guess as his saliva.

“Y- yo-you can’t be back. You’re dead. I’m hallucinating, that’s it, this is what it is. An hallucination, I’m going to go back to bed and then when I wake up this will all have been a very bad dream and none of this has happened. Petunia will have made my breakfast, Dudley will be getting ready to go back to school, and I will be going to work, yes, yes sounds good...”

“Dursley, you’re talking to yourself, it’s not very becoming. People might think you’ve gone mad. True, by the time I’m done with you your family, friends, and neighbours, will probably think along the same lines as that, but I want to be the one who causes it, not you. Otherwise you’d just be ruining my fun.” He leaned as close as he

could to Vernon without having the feeling of being sick. "Never mess with a Potter."

"I didn't do anything." Vernon tried to explain.

"What didn't you do?" James asked putting on a puzzled expression.

"Whatever your freak of a son has said I have done, I haven't. He's a liar, he lies all the time." Vernon stopped he had a feeling he was digging himself into an even bigger grave, then he already found himself in.

James held his wand high in the air and was ready to strike. "Any last words?" He asked.

"I'm not afraid of you, Potter." Vernon tried in one last pathetic attempt to show some kind of bravery.

"Your eyes, and you're behaviour two minutes ago, seem to tell me otherwise." James said mocking Vernon.

"You do anything to me, and I swear when Harry comes home for the summer I will kill him."

James growled deep within his throat. "Harry won't be coming back here next summer, the summer after that, and the summer after that. Harry will never step foot into this house again. Since I am his father he'll be staying with me."

"That's where you're wrong, Potter," This is where Vernon started to get a backbone. "You lost all guardianship over him the minute you "died" Harry is my charge now."

"You're muggle laws do not apply in the Wizarding World, Dursley. Get it through your thick skull. We actually run your world, and if we wanted to we could take it over within minutes."

Vernon's eyes grew round and wide, he knew he had gone too far when he killed the bird, but Harry needed to be taught a lesson, he wondered what Harry's father would do to him.



“Conseco Intro.”

Vernon was surprised the spell hit him fast and sharp, but it did not hurt as much as he expected it to. It made him feel light headed but at the same time eerily peaceful. He felt his temperature begin to rise, and his blood seemed to be boiling. Yet it still felt nice.

He watched in confusion as small scratch marks that were no bigger than paper cuts pulled apart his skin, to reveal his body's insides. He continued to watch in morbid fascination as the flesh along one of his fingers spread wide open, revealing the bone that was his finger. That pleasant feeling was gone now, and all he felt was pain.

“What have you done to me?” Vernon's lips trembled and his voice was hoarse with fear.

“Don't worry,” James reassured him, “In a matter of minutes you'll be dead.”

“Tell me.” Vernon whimpered.

“If you really must know, it's a cutting curse. It cuts through the person's body from the inside out. It starts off at the fingers and moves itself along to the arms; it will then spread to your shoulder blades, your stomach, and your feet. It only stops when your whole body literally falls apart.” James said lazily.

“I thought you said that this wasn't an unforgivable curse.”

“Oh, and its not. You see this curse is considered a vengeance curse. Any wizard is allowed to perform this particular curse as long as the punishment fits the crime. There are various degrees in which this particular curse can go through, and yours is the most advanced, considering that my only son, the only reminder that I have left of my precious Lily, is lying in a comatose state, no thanks to you, so this curse gives me the privilege of going as far as killing you, because Harry is practically dead.”

“But I didn't kill Harry, you just said so yourself.” Vernon screamed as the curse ripped open his skin revealing his wrist bone. The sight before Vernon was ghastly, his finger bones and wrist bones fell to

the floor because there was nothing left, his skin was dangling open revealing emptiness, and blood was pouring down everywhere from his arm.

James just sat back with a triumphant glee on his face. To him the picture was perfect. He only wished that Sirius were there to share in his revenge.

"You do know he's right James." A voice whispered softly from behind him.

He had been so consumed with the deteriorating large man in front of him that he did not hear the "popping" sounds of any apparitioners.

James turned around to see the intruder, and there standing in front of him was the second last marauder.

"Let him go, c'mon mate, he's not worth it."

"But, Harry." James shook his head sadly.

"Is alive and he'll wake up." Remus moved closer to his friend. "You know Harry would not want you to hurt his Uncle, no matter what he did to him. Harry would not want you to be a murderer."

"But..."

"No buts James, I know Harry and if you do something like this and finish through with it he won't want anything to do with you."

"I'm his father."

"Especially his father." Remus wanted to take his best friend and just take away the pained expression on his face. He knew how much his friend was hurting, but letting him kill someone would be against his conscience.

James collapsed to the floor. Cradling his body into his arms. He just wanted everything back to the way it was. Little Harry in his pram, Lily rocking him back and forth, and singing her favourite lullaby, and him flooing home to see his small wonderful family.

Remus went and threw his arms around his fallen friend, and he held him tightly, wanting only to protect the man that had protected him when he was a young boy.

Remus was the one to break the silence. "I think it's time you took the curse off of him."

"I think that maybe you're right." James cocked his head to the side, and studied the man; he then turned back to his friend. "You're right Remus he's not worth it." James flicked his wand and Vernon felt the curse receding in his body, apparently his arm grew back, and the only reminder that it had happened was the fact that there was a dull tingling where the bones had grown back.

"Petrificus Totalus." Remus cast the curse, so that Vernon would not be able to get away.

"I've missed you." James told his friend.

"I've missed you too."

"How did you know I was back and that I was here?"

"It wasn't too hard, old friend." He chuckled. "Dumbledore told me and a select few what he had done. I then went to search for you, but couldn't find you anywhere in the castle. I knew that you wouldn't leave Harry's side, not for a second, except to get revenge. So I figured you were here, and with a wand pointing spell, I was able to find you within seconds."

"You were always the clever one in our group, me and Sirius would spend hours debating why you hung out with us at all, we were so different."

"C'mon you guys had your moments. How else would I have scored a date with Polly Hannigan in seventh year if it weren't for you?"

"Oh you mean she didn't go out with you because of moony." James teased his friend. "I always heard she was fascinated with half breeds." He laughed

Usually that term would have been degrading, but Remus knew his friend was joking. James had been doing that since the wolf first bit him. "Let's go leave him here, and we'll go to the Three Broomsticks for a firewhiskey. How does that sound?"

"Sounds good to me, but what about him?" James jerked a finger in the direction of the stilled man.

"Don't worry about him, I'm sure someone will find him eventually."

"Let's go I could do with a firewhiskey, it's hard work being a Potter." James smiled at his friend.

"I don't think that it would be a good idea if you two went." Another voice entered into their conversation. "Nobody knows that James Potter is alive, and I want to keep it that way. If the Death Eaters got wind of this it would mean certain death for James. I suggest that both of you go back to Hogwarts where it is safe."

James was livid, he already told Albus to leave him alone, and yet here he was still meddling in things he should not have been meddling in.

"Didn't I tell you to mind your own business?" James growled. "What are you doing here anyways? This does not concern you."

"But this does concern one of my students welfare. If his father gets killed for the second time in his life, that boy would probably jump from the tallest tower at Hogwarts."

James ignored Albus and turned to his friend. "Let's go Remus, I can hear that firewhiskey calling my name now."

"If you still want to."

"Of course I do." He turned to face Dumbledore "The muggle is all yours, do what you want with him, but as far as I'm concerned I'm not done dealing with you yet." With that James disappeared to the Three Broomsticks.

"Don't worry Albus, he'll come around soon, he's just hurting right now, and the one person that would cheer him up isn't around anymore, just give it time."

"No, he won't Remus, that boy will never forgive me." He shook his head sadly.

Deep inside of him he knew that James was too far-gone in his hatred for him that he would never be able to forgive and forget. He knew that James would continue to help the light, but their father/son relationship was over.

"You've forgotten one thing, Albus."

"What's that?"

"Harry. Harry will make things right between you two again. You are like a grandfather to him."

"Thank you Remus. I think you should go now, James is probably sitting in the Three Broomsticks by himself, I think he needs your company, go and join him, and I'll deal with the muggle."

Once Remus was gone, Albus turned to face Vernon Dursley. He lifted the Petrificus Totalus from him, and Vernon turned a shade of green.

"I saw what James had done to you, and though I do not condone it, I say you deserved what you got. However, it is now my turn to do justice for Harry."

"Please, have mercy on me." Vernon begged.

Dumbledore regarded the man with distaste. "Because I am head of the Wizengamot and because Fudge wants to better himself, he has allowed me free reign where punishment is due. In most cases the punishment should fit the crime, so I have figured out the most suitable punishment for you. Because you showed Harry no mercy, I do not plan to show any in your direction. You have taken away the boy's innocence, which is his soul. True others have taken it away long before, but those were people he did not trust, you however are

his guardian, and a revolting one at that. You took away all of his valued possessions, the one's his father had given him, and his Godfather, who by the way he had just recently lost. That is unacceptable, even Death Eaters and Tom Riddle would agree with me on this one, no wizard should be treated the way that Harry was, by a simpleton muggle as yourself. So based on this I have come to the conclusion that you should have your soul taken from you. This is my decree, that is how it is shall be written, and so it shall be." The last line made the punishment legal.

"My soul, you can't take my soul. A soul is an inanimate object." He scoffed at the man who thought was so powerful, but clearly Vernon could tell he was not.

Dumbledore did not respond to this comment that was directed towards him. He pretended instead that the man had said nothing to him. He magically summoned a small glass vial to his left hand, and without the assistance of a wand he stretched his right hand out and spoke, "animus inquam expostulo vos incedo hactenus valero." Dumbledore waited for the spell to work.

He did not have to wait that much longer, because he saw Vernon's face go pale.

Vernon struggled to remain calm, but when he felt something start to pull him apart he again he screamed. He thought this time he was going to die, and if he knew what was going to happen to him afterwards, he probably wished he had. He clamped a big beefy hand over his mouth as he felt something trying to escape from his closed lips. He did not succeed.

Vernon stared transfixed at the small black orb that was his soul. It entered the vial, and the vial sealed itself closed and vanished.

Albus' eyes sparkled for the first time since Harry's arrival at Hogwarts.

Vernon was confused he could not remember anything. He did not even know who he was, or where he was. He could not even place the old man was that was standing beside him, but he did seem kind, or so he thought.

“Who am I?” He was scared and he felt so empty, at least he could talk.

“Let’s get you to St. Mungo’s they will be able to give you the help that you need.” Dumbledore pulled him off of his feet rather roughly.

Albus made the man touch a lemon drop wrapper, and they both felt the tug around their naval as the port key took them away.

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The waiting room in St. Mungo's was crowded with patients, waiting to be seen by a doctor. Albus guided Vernon to the administration desk.

“How can I help you today Professor?” A kindly witch asked from behind the desk, eyeing the large man that Dumbledore held firmly in his grasp.

“Ahh, my dear Petrini, this man has seemed to have “misplaced” his soul.” Dumbledore grinned from ear to ear.

“Gotcha.” The friendly witch from behind the desk smiled at him again. “I’ll just call for some orderlies to come and take him to his new room to get him settled. Is it going to be a long term or short term stay?”

"It all depends Petrini, it all depends."

Witch Petrini was used to this kind of behaviour from Albus Dumbledore. Every so often he would just appear with someone that was injured and demand a room. She never asked questions, she knew better than that. Plus Albus Dumbledore was the greatest wizard that ever lived, and he was her hero.

Albus turned to Vernon who seemed to have gone catatonic in his state. “You will gain your soul back when Harry’s has been returned to him.”

No matter how harsh his punishments were, as long as the victims would come out alright, so would their offenders. However, the

offenders would not be able to forget their ordeals, as a constant reminder to never do what they did ever again.

Two orderlies appeared and took Vernon Dursley away from Dumbledore.

"Thank you, Petrini. It has been a pleasure seeing you again."

“The pleasure was all mine.” She shook her head and laughed. That man was too much.

Albus Dumbledore disappeared from St. Mungo's and returned to Privet Drive. He set a letter on the kitchen table for Mrs. Dursley regarding her husband and the sad story that went with his current state. He then went back to Hogwarts feeling better than he had in days.

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An apparated Remus Lupin landed in the middle of Hogsmeade a few steps away from the Three Broomsticks. He did not think that the patrons there would appreciate if somebody landed on them accidentally, and he believed neither would Madame Rosmerta. She would for sure give him a what for.

Before he even took a step, a hand clasped over his mouth and dragged him into a dark alleyway. He had been too slow to react and the person dragging him was too fast.

“Don’t move.” A husky voice commanded him.

“Wha...”

"Shh." The husky voice interrupted him.

The man let Remus go, and he pulled his wand out from his robe. He performed a lumos and recognized his kidnapper. “James.” He sighed. “What the hell was that for?” He punched his friend in the arm.



James rubbed the now sore spot. "Sorry mate. Didn't want anyone to see me. Just let me transform and then we'll get our drinks."

"I thought you weren't listening to Albus." He grinned.

"I am not an Imbecile, Remus. I was going to change my appearance even before the old codger mentioned for me to do that. I don't want strangers to know that I'm alive, the last thing I need right now, is for Harry to lose me for a second time."

Remus just smirked at his old friend. He was glad to have him back, he was not alone anymore and that made him truly happy.

They left the dark alleyway, with James being an exact duplicate of Remus.

"What am I going to tell people?" Remus scoffed as he stared at a mirror image of himself. "They know me there, they know I don't have any brothers."

"It's pretty obvious." James rolled his eyes at his friend, his cocky nature returning full force. "If anybody asks I'm your first cousin on your mother's side, visiting from Ireland."

The two men walked to the Three Broomsticks and for the next couple of hours they drank and ate, reuniting as friends, instead of enemies.

At the end of the day they left the little pub and made their way to the dark alley where James could transform back into his proper self, and then they used a portkey back to Hogwarts.

Overall the day had been a pretty accomplishing day.

Little did they know the brown rat with a silver paw and a missing toe on his right hand had been following the two men since their first trip into the alley.

Wormtail scurried away from his hiding spot behind the brick wall, as fast as his little legs would carry him. This was what he had been waiting for. News this big could make him one of the highest ranked death eaters out there along with Lucius Malfoy, and Bellatrix Lestrange. He dreamt of the ultimate glory that would be bestowed upon him, all the weakest death eaters facing him and bowing down before his feet. He would no longer be the stumpy, clumsy, pathetic dribbling fool he used to be, he would now be the one most revered. Wormtail was lost in his thoughts about the riches and fame he would receive that he did not realize he had reached his destination. He came out of his animagus form and came to be a short stocky man that resembled his animal form.

Peter entered the castle stealthily. He did not want to be noticed by anyone. He wanted the meeting with his master to be a quiet affair. He was afraid that if his fellow death eaters got wind of his information they would use it for their own personal gain. Peter wanted this one all for himself.

He knocked on the huge oak doors to the study. He knew that was where his master spent most of his free time, and where he could be found now.

"Enter." A harsh voice called from behind the doors.

Peter pushed the heavy doors opened. He crossed the room and made his way to the desk where Voldemort sat.

"My Lord." Peter's voice slightly quavered from fright.

"What is it Wormtail, this better be important, I am in an crucial meeting right now, and you've just interrupted it."

To answer Peter's unasked question, the chair opposite of Voldemort's desk swivelled around to show a man with long silvery hair, and steel grey eyes. Lucius Malfoy smirked at the stumpy man before him. Lucius could not understand why Voldemort kept Pettigrew around, but was not stupid enough to ask him, punishment would not be worth it.

Peter studied Lucius Malfoy carefully. He did not wish for that man to be there when he disclosed his information. "My, Lord, I was hoping for some privacy, the information that I have just found out is quite vital to you conquering the Wizarding World. This new information could be a devastating blow to your accomplishments."

Voldemort was angry, his red eyes grew wider, and Peter knew he made a mistake when he asked for Malfoy's dismissal.

"Now, Now, Wormtail," Voldemort, chided him, "Lucius is my most trusted death eater. Surely what you have got to say in front of me, can reach his ears to."

"I-I'm sorry My Lord, but I was really hoping for some privacy. Please." Peter stammered.

"I will not tolerate such insolence. How dare you disrespect someone who is higher ranked than you? Crucio."

Lucius and Voldemort sneered at the convulsing man on the hard wood floor.

"It is alright My Lord. As enjoyable as this is I must leave to my Manor. Draco and Narcissa are expecting me home for dinner it is his birthday today, and I do not want to be late for the celebration."

"Give him my regards Lucius, and I expect to see him soon. I am anxious for him to get the mark. He will be an extraordinary asset to my cause."

"And he is looking forward to joining your cause My Lord, or if you don't mind our cause."

"Not at all Lucius, not at all."

Lucius draped his travelling cloak over his shoulders, and closed it with a silver snake clasp. He then took his snake tipped cane and before he left he kissed the hem of his masters robe.

Once Lucius was gone Voldemort released Pettigrew from the unforgivable. With a shaky step Peter guided his sore body to the chair that had been previously occupied by Malfoy.

Red eyes turned to slits as the rat like man had the audacity to sit down before he did. He felt the need to curse the man again, but in the long run decided it would be better to hear his news first, and then punish him accordingly.

Voldemort sat himself behind his desk, and waited for the man to start. After several moment of complete silence he realized that he would have to be the one to initiate the conversation.

“Well, Wormtail what news do you bring to me?”

Peter knew he should have been the one to speak first, but his body was sore and would not consent to any body movements. The long pause was more for his benefit to gain control than anything else. “It is about Severus Snape, Master.”

“And what about him.”

“Everything that you have known about him is false, he isn’t even Severus.”

“What do you mean, Wormtail?” Voldemort was quickly losing what was left of his remaining patience.

“Severus is really James Potter.”

“Don’t be so foolish...”

“No, My Lord I saw it, it’s true. Severus apparated into Diagon Alley, in the alleyway that I was guarding, and then he transformed into James Potter.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes, My Lord, Quite sure.”

‘Legilimens.’ A rush of images passed through the Dark Lord’s head, as he saw what the other man had seen. Severus Snape entering in a dark alley, closed his eyes, shook his head, and then transformed into James Potter. “It can’t be true.” Voldemort murmured releasing Wormtail from his magical grip. “Why didn’t you tell me James Potter was a metamorphamagus?”

“I-I-I didn’t know.”

“How could you not know Wormtail, you have spent almost your whole life surrounded by the so called ‘Marauders’.

“I wasn’t privy to all of their secrets, My Lord.”

“You are a disgrace to wizards everywhere Wormtail. Even young Messrs Crabbe and Goyle are better wizards than you, and they spend three quarters of their time eating.”

This was not the way that Wormtail had expected the situation to go. His dream of being inducted into the inner circle seemed to fade slowly from his view.

“I came, My Lord, right when I found out. My loyalties to you have never wavered.”

“Are they Wormtail?” Voldemort’s mouth cracking into a snake like smile.

“Yes, My Lord.”

“Wormtail you must think of me a fool.” This time Voldemort laughed.

A high-pitched laugh that echoed off the walls, and made the terrified man cringe.

“Never, My Lord.”

“No Wormtail, I believe you do. Answer me this, when were you going to mention about the wizards debt you owe to one Harry James Potter?”

Wormtail fell backwards from surprise. He never told anyone what happened at the shrieking shack so how could Voldemort even know?

"I was not hiding anything, My Lord. I just didn't find it of any importance."

Voldemort chuckled loudly again. It was a cold and dangerous laugh. “I saw Wormtail a quick glimpse of the image through the legilimens that I put on you. I saw Potter saving your life from death’s door. Too bad he is not here to save you now. Shame isn’t it?”

Peter Pettigrew did not know how this had happened, and he fell to the hardwood floor dead, while still in thought of how his demise came to pass.

Voldemort sighed and left the body in his study, a house elf would eventually come to take it away. He knew now he had to find another spy. He had not planned on getting rid of Wormtail this early, he was hoping for Wormtail to last for another two years, and then he would kill him, but he could not let a betrayal such as this go. There were other illegal animagus in his pack of death eaters and he would just have to settle on using one of them to spy on the Potter brat, and now his father, as well.

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Two days later Voldemort's inner circle surrounded him. He was grateful for his most trusted allies they would not disappoint him.

"I have called you all today to let you know of some new revelations in our plans. It appears that James Potter is alive and Severus Snape is dead. How he came to be alive I still do not know, but I intend to find out. I need a spy stationed from now on at Hogwarts full time. I would expect a detailed report of the happenings, and together we will overtake both the Potter's and then Wizarding Britain."

“We will do anything for you my Lord.” Lucius spoke up from the small exclusive crowd.

"I know you would, Lucius, but I need someone who will be able to transform into a small creature. I need an animagus."

The ruffling of whispers and cloaks spread throughout the circle, everybody in attendance could transform, but only into large creatures. There were nervous flickers being sent to their comrades throughout the circle when nobody upped and volunteered.

"Well anybody, or do I have to curse you all to the nether regions."

"It is not that, my Lord." Nott spoke up. "It is just that the animals that all of us can transform into is rather large and highly conspicuous."

"Well then I give you all three days time to learn how to transfigure yourselves, or else be damned, we will reconvene at that time."

The group nodded their assent. They had no choice. They all bowed down and one by one kissed the hem of their master's robe. They exited silently, not a breath of air was passed between the small group. All were lost in their own thoughts about how they would be able to do the impossible, when it took them all nearly three years to be able to achieve their animal forms as is.

As Lucius was leaving with the rest of the group an idea came to light, something that would allow Draco into the ranks. He made his way back into the meeting room. He could not imagine why he did not think of it before.

"My Lord, I do not mean to intrude, but I have news that would help with the problem at hand."

"Hmm." Voldemort said without even acknowledging his now most faithful servant's existence.

"Draco, My Lord. He has recently learned how to become an Animagi."

"And what animal does the younger Malfoy change into, a dragon I suppose." He smirked more to himself than anything else.

“Exactly, but not just a dragon, a miniature dragon, small scaled, and hardly noticeable at all.”

“I am glad to hear of this, but he has not even has his induction yet, Lucius, and this is a very important task. I was actually hoping that you would be able to master the task that I have set forth.”

“I was thinking, My Lord, that this could be Draco’s initiation. If he could do it well then he has already proven himself has he not?”

Any outburst like this would have found any of his other servant's screaming on the ground in pain. He knew Lucius had a point and he was eager to get the younger Malfoy in his ranks. With the two Malfoy's the dark side would be stronger then they had ever been before.

“Alright Lucius, I want to speak to Draco personally, first, If I am going to allow for this to happen. Tomorrow night I will meet you in the gardens and he will show me his animalistic form.”

“Yes, My Lord. We will be here tomorrow, and thank you.”

Lucius strolled out of the room, and a chill went down his spine when he heard the shout of his master reaching his ears in a warning. “This better work Lucius or else.”

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“Draco, do not ruin this for me, or you.” Lucius said threateningly to his son.

Draco just nodded. For the whole day Lucius had forced his son to change into his small dragon form, and then change back. He was told that he was going to go to the dark lord and become a spy for him if all went well. He was looking forward to the day when he would join his father in the fight against mudbloods and half-breeds.

“Father, do I get my mark if I do this?” Eyes like silver sparkling at his father’s answer.



“After you do this, and you do not disappoint me you will get your mark, now one more time.”

After about fifteen more switches Lucius was pleased with Draco's animagus form, and he took his son's hand and apparated them both to the waiting dark lords gardens.

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“Does he suffice, My Lord?” Lucius questioned with bated breath.

“He will do fine, Lucius.” Voldemort told his companion.

The two Malfoy's let out a silent sigh of relief. It did not go unnoticed by Voldemort.

“You know what must be done?” Voldemort asked the younger Malfoy.

“Yes, sir.” Draco said, anticipation and worry written all over his face, his usual mask seemed to come undone with the end of the day.

“Very well go, and I expect a report by Wednesday.”

“Yes Sir.” Draco repeated himself once more, and with that he disappeared from sight of the two comrades.

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When Draco arrived at Hogwarts he was in his dragon form. He had no idea where he was supposed to start looking. He had been informed of what had happened that had lead him there that night, but he had no idea where to find everybody. The dark Lord and his father left out that one part.

From where he stood he heard two familiar voices, the mudblood and the weasel, it did not strike his curiosity to as why they were there, he was just ecstatic that they were. He followed the voices up the stairs, which led him into the infirmary. When he arrived it looked like a small

party was going on. A small sleeping figure was surrounded by seven very boisterous people. He perched himself on a ledge that was near the bed, and observed what was going on, just like he had been instructed to do.

Nobody seemed any wiser, to the new member of the party.

“Hey remember in sixth year the one that landed you into detention for three weeks?” Remus asked his friend.

“Yes?” James asked back.

“Let’s see that one.” He grinned as his best friend turned a dark shade of red.

"I think I'll leave that one out."

“Let’s see Dumbledore.” Fred called out.

"No, no that's enough for now, I'm tired. I have already done at least a million galleons worth of changes." James leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes from wariness.

“Alright everybody, time for bed. James has a point, it’s late and Harry is not waking up tonight.”

Everybody got up and headed out of the hospital wing.

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The lone figure sat in the darkness. The darkness that surrounded him camouflaged his ebony hair. He did not know how long he was there, but it felt like an eternity. He knew he had a home, and friends, and he could remember what he was, he just could not seem to find a way out of the darkness.

Harry Potter rocked himself back and forth, for a couple of minutes he thought he heard his friends, talking and laughing. The laughter cut through the blackness that engulfed him, and he thought he could make out the infirmary of Hogwarts. He saw dim outlines of people

that he could recognize, the Weasley's, Hermione, and Remus Lupin, and one person he had never met before, but seemed oddly familiar. He wanted to get a closer look, but then everything started to blur, and just as soon as he saw the familiar, it ended.

He was left alone and scared. Harry had no clue how he ended up in this mysterious place. The last thing he remembered was his Uncle Vernon beating him in the cupboard.

The only thing that he could think of was that he was in the cupboard and hearing and seeing his friends was just a dream.

Slowly tears ran down his face. The boy who lived was tired and drained. He wanted Hedwig, but knew he would never see her again. He wanted his wand; the only object that he felt ever really protected him. Mostly, however, he wanted someone to just hold him, someone that loved him. For the first time in his life he desperately yearned for a parent.

The coldness that went with the dark was too much for his already thin too frame. He pulled his body into a tight ball hoping to get warmed, but the warmth never came, just like the light. Nothing came and he was alone. He was always alone, even when he was at Hogwarts, or at the Dursley's, there was no one anywhere that would always be by his side.

He thought he found the person to take away his pain and make him feel loved in Sirius. Sirius would have done anything and everything for him, and he did, and for that he died. Now Harry was all alone again. He had Remus, but Remus was not the same. Nobody would be able to fill the empty void that he was feeling.

With his breathing finally slowing down, and his nerves calming, Harry was able to fall asleep. He was tired. The cold was still there but it slowly ebbed away. Instead of the cold a new feeling surpassed through his body. It was warm, but there was more to it, it felt like love.

He heard another's voice singing softly, something he remembered from a dream, or a memory. It was something his mom sang to him when he was just an infant. He hoped that whoever was with him would not go away.

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He rubbed smooth circles on Harry's back, something he had not had a chance to do since Harry was a baby, and he was truly himself and not an impostor.

A soft cough from behind him alerted James that him and his son were not alone anymore. He heaved a sigh of frustration, not once since he had turned back into himself was he able to get one moment of alone time with his boy. No not boy a young man.

“So, what happened to the Dursley’s?” James asked.

“So, you can’t tell me what you did? Fine.” And he turned his back from his former professor, his gaze lingering on his son.

“So how are you doing?” Dumbledore asked hoping to start a civil conversation.

There came no reply. James ignored the unwanted visitor and kept all his attention on his son.

"I think we need to have a little chat. Why don't you come with me to my office and we can have a snack before dinner time."

Still no reply. Dumbledore sighed dejectedly.

Dumbledore was worried. Since James' return from the Three Broomsticks with Remus, all he did was sulk around the castle, between the corridors and the hospital wings. Granted James was putting up a magnificent charade when others were around, secretly and behind everybody's back, James was not looking after himself, and Dumbledore was worried.

"Leave me alone." Came the hollow reply from James.

"Now! And this is not an invite, but a command." Dumbledore rose to his full height, his eyes turning a dark blue that almost looked like black. The man could be frightening when he wanted to.

"Ha! What are you going to do to me, erase my memory, and tell me my name is McGonagall? Oops sorry forgot you did that already, my bad." James spat.

"If that's what it takes yes, I'll do it again, within a heartbeat. And I may have to, considering you act like a three year old child, every time I come into the room."

"You deserve no more from me. You don't care about anybody else besides yourself and the stupid war. We are all pawns in your plans, and I refuse to be played anymore."

"That was never my intention."

"No it may not have started that way, but that's how it went. Now leave, I have ordered something from the house elves and they will be bringing me dinner here."

"How come I don't believe you?"

“Personally I don’t care whether you do or not.”

“Do you think this is what Lily would have wanted, or Severus, or even Sirius? They risked their lives to save Harry’s and yours and now you are just sitting here wallowing in self-pity? Shame on you!” Dumbledore scolded. He knew James was not wallowing in self – pity, but he wanted to get a rise out of the man, and he did.

James leapt up off the bed, like a lion ready to pounce on his prey. “Don’t you dare speak to me about them. You have no right. NONE.”

“Well then stop acting like a Malfoy who didn’t get his way.”

This truly made James' blood start to boil. First he was compared to a three-year-old child, then Dumbledore started talking about every single person that he loved and lost, and then to add insult to injury Dumbledore compared him to a Malfoy.

Forgetting about his wand, James struck Dumbledore across the face, startling the elder wizard and knocking him to the floor. A residual sound from the slap bounced off the walls.

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Harry was happy for the warmth that was provided for him, even if it was something he could not comprehend. All he knew was that he did not want it to die out.

From where he was nestled on the floor, he was able to start seeing Hogwarts again through hazy eyes. He could make out a stranger entering the room, but upon closer investigation he was able to discern the form of his old headmaster.

Unlike the last few times, the images were stronger, and he knew that if he could just escape the darkness then redemption would come to him.

He watched the scene unfold and realized that whomever Dumbledore was talking to he was trying to make his warmth leave him. And he did not want the warmth to leave he felt safe and secure.

He never felt like that before, he finally found what that warmth actually meant, love, and all he knew was that Dumbledore was trying to take that away from him.

He heard Dumbledore provoking the man, and then he saw the headmaster fall to the floor.

The sound that entered erupted in his oversensitized ears, and head. It reminded him of his uncle's slaps. He felt his body jerk and he screamed the word, "NO."

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James and Albus stopped from where they were standing and stared at the very awake and very screaming sounds coming from Harry.

His face was red from screaming, and his skin was ghostly white. James looked at his terrified son, and felt as if his heart would break. This was not something any father should have to see.

When brown eyes met emerald eyes. The boy passed out.

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Harry realized that it was not a dream and he was in Hogwarts. His headmaster had been there all along, and with him there was that familiar stranger.

As his eyes met the other one's, Harry was finally able to recognize the man for what he was worth.

Harry was staring at his supposedly dead father.

His body and mind could not register all that, and he fell back down in the cold black abyss.

“Harry.” James cried as he watched his son fall back down on the bed. “Look what you’ve done.” He rounded on the fallen wizard.

“No my dear boy. What you have done.” The old wizard pulled himself off of the floor and brushed the dust off of his robes.

Never in his whole life had anybody had the audacity to do to him what the younger man did. He was proud, and he realized that he had made the mistake of denying the two people he cared for most of all in the world, the things that they wanted the most. A family.

Dumbledore made his way to Harry’s bed, but a strong grip against his arm stopped him from moving any further. He sighed warily as James’ tight grip impossible as it may seem, strengthened.

“I am not going to harm him in anyway.” He said gently. “I’m just going to check on his vitals, contrary to what you may think I still care strongly for the boy.”

James considered Dumbledore for a moment, but he wanted to make sure that his son was not hurt and that he was ok.

The grip became lax, and Dumbledore moved to the bed. He placed his hand on the sleeping boys wrist. “He is not in a coma, he has just fainted.”

James looked like he himself was ready to faint at the outcome of all of this.

“I can revive him now, if you would like?” Albus asked.

“No, wait a few minutes. I think I need to change back to good old Snivellus.” He grinned as the name brought back so many good memories of the man who gave up his life to save another’s. “I think I’ve got to tell Harry this gradually.”

“As you wish. When you’re ready let me know.”

There was a long pause and when James had gone back into Severus form he let Dumbledore know that he was ready.



“Enervate.” The old wizard said.

Emerald green eyes fluttered open. Harry was confused and scared, he remembered seeing Dumbledore talking to someone. Someone who looked really familiar, and then he remembered. Dumbledore was talking to his father. He screamed again, but before he could collapse, a pair of strong arms wrapped around his body, comfortingly.

When Harry saw who was holding him he screamed harder, and his face began to pale. He could not register why Snape would be holding him, but whatever the reason was it still terrified him beyond belief. He tried to struggle, but it became futile as he realized the strong grip of the potion's master was relentless. He still tried and failed. When Severus did not let go again Harry screamed harder with all his might.

The two men were quite surprised at the boy screaming bloody murder. For someone that had just come out of a lengthy coma, the boy was able to put up one hell of a fight.

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Hermione lay asleep in her bed; exhaustion had finally caught up with her tired body. She felt like she could sleep for a hundred years, so when the first scream of the night woke her up she was ready to start scolding the person who was the cause for all of the noise, however, as soon as the screaming started it finished. She rolled over onto her stomach and fell asleep once more.

She was dreaming of unicorns running along the water's edge of the great lake. It was a beautiful day, with a slight breeze, clouds in the sky, the sun shining down on her body. Her, Ron, and Harry were sitting under the beech tree, just watching the wondrous sight that was pictured before their eyes. Nothing could ruin that day. Or so she thought.

Out of nowhere came a loud screeching sound. It sounded like someone was being strangled to death. The unicorns took to cover in the forbidden forest, and the trio tried to find the source of the noise, with no such luck. They all looked at each other in confusion, and

frightened for the person who was making all that noise. Another loud long wail filled the sky, and Hermione plundered to the ground, out of shock. The two boys left standing went to try to help her up, but couldn't, apparently Hermione had fallen in some sort of a bramble bush, and couldn't seem to get out. No matter how hard they were tugging it did not seem to help matters. Harry and Ron stood up shrugged and left the trapped Hermione, to get out herself.

She was stunned by how her best friend and her boyfriend could leave her in such a deadly position. Her hands felt around for anything to grip, and what it found surprised her. It was soft and warm, not like what the thorns were supposed to feel like.

Her eyes snapped opened. Hermione was laying on the floor trapped in her blankets. Nothing was real, except for the hollow screeching sound. When she finally realized that it was just a dream her heart rate returned to normal, and her body stopped trembling, her mind was sound once more and she felt her body return to it's regular state. She untangled herself from the onslaught of sheets, and tiredly made her way to the common room, where she assumed the noisemakers could be found.

She descended the stairs and saw Fred, George, Ron, and Ginny all huddled up by the fire, the wailing continuing feverishly.

"Now really." She cried. "Enough's enough. I don't know and don't want to know what you're up to, but isn't it time you went to bed, and stopped making so much noise."

Four red headed people turned to look at the bleary-eyed bushy haired girl, flushed anger apparent in all of their faces.

"First of Hermione, we are not the one's making any of the noises that you are hearing. Second it is summer and your prefect duties do not apply during the off school year. Third off Fred and I are out of Hogwarts and we do not have to take orders from you any more." Said a hot-tempered George.

"If it's not you then who is it?" She questioned.

“Mione, some times you can be so thick, even for a witch of your intelligence.” Fred piped in. “If it’s not one of us then who do you think it is?”

“Harry.” Hermione whispered so quietly that her friends had almost missed her reply. Her eyes grew wide as she took in what she herself had said. “Harry’s awake. She screamed, jumping up and down, we have to go see him.”

She rushed to the fat lady’s portrait and was almost there when Ron came up behind her and grabbed her shoulders.

‘Ron what are you doing? Let go of me.’ She cried.

He held onto her more firmly and gently pushed her into the puffy chintz chair by the fireplace.

She gave them all a quizzical look, waiting for someone to give her some kind of explanation.

“It is Harry, he has definitely awoken, but he’s been screaming his head off for like ten minutes now, and every time we think it’s finally safe and he’s quieted the whole thing starts again.” Ginny answered Hermione’s unasked question.

“If we go to see him that would probably calm him down wouldn’t it. Seeing all of us there, I’m sure he would feel better.” She said determinedly.

“Can’t.” Fred vaguely replied. He conjured up marshmallows and some sticks and passed them around to his siblings and friend. They were not in the mood to eat, but it gave them something to do.

“Why not?” Hermione stared at her marshmallow roasting in the fire, wondering why they were being deprived of seeing their broken friend, whom they helped to save.

“Because the fat lady’s locked us in, there’s no way to get out. We think Dumbledore might have had something to do with that, probably wants to give Harry some time to recuperate and then get reacquainted with his father.”

“Oh.” Hermione looked placid, after that. She knew that she had no right to interfere with Harry and his father reuniting, and she had no desire to intrude on what would be a critical turning point for the two of them, if they were ever going to have any hope of putting back the pieces to their broken family.

The friends watched the fire as their once forgotten marshmallows melted into the flames, causing the fire to change from orange to white and then back again, apparently even the flames at Hogwarts was bewitched. The interruptions of jagged screaming was the only sound that entered the Gryffindor common room, again that night.

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For a boy so small and sick the “potions master” and the headmaster had no clue how Harry had become so fast. They were both taken aback when Harry had finally been able to scratch “Severus” that he finally had to let go of the boy.

It had taken almost twenty minutes for him to find release, and when he did he made a beeline for the exit to the infirmary. He did not want to stay with a crazed Severus Snape, and with Dumbledore who had just watched with amusement written across his face that rivalled the sparkle in his deep blue eyes.

He had about a few more strides to take and he would soon be free. His body sore and aching he was there. Just as he was at the door, it swung shut right in his face. Surprise took him by force, and he turned to see Severus Snape pale and shaking. He had looked like Harry had never seen him, even madder then when he had entered the pensieve uninvited last year.

“What do you think you’re doing?” James shouted at his trembling son. He could not help but yell. When he saw Harry running his heart gave way. He was so scared that Harry would hurt himself or fall down from lack of energy, thus leaving him in another coma. James did not want that, now that his son was awake the truth would be revealed. “Don’t you ever do that again! Do you hear me?” James walked closer to his son, and tried to make a grab for him, he was

taken by surprise when Harry had curled into a ball at the foot of the door, trying to make himself as small as possible.

"No, please don't." He cried. "I promise I'll be good. I promise. Just don't please."

"Harry?" James asked cautiously. "Harry nobody is going to hurt you." He knelt beside his broken son, and ever so gently pulled Harry's arms away from his face.

Harry yelled and tried to kick out, but James was faster and moved swiftly away from the flailing legs. Instead of being mad he looked as if that gesture might have been the funniest thing he had ever seen if the situation was not so grave.

"Harry. I'm not going to hurt you." He tried to look as forlorn as possible in Severus' body, hoping his son would have pity on him, even though he knew Harry would probably feel nothing but loathing for him, considering for the past six years he had made Harry's life a living hell.

Harry pulled his hands back from Snape's grasp. He did not know why the potions professor was acting kind and gentle, but it was unnerving him.

"Professor Dumbledore." He cried imploringly to the headmaster. "Help me."

Albus took pity on the scared child and went to go collect Harry from an insane looking Snape.

"Do not come near us." James screeched at the older wizard.

"The child is frightened, Severus, look at him. He does not understand that you do not wish him harm."

"It is your fault then, isn't it? You will not go near him. I think it's best you leave, and let me deal with him by myself." James was getting angrier by the minute; he would not be in this position if Albus had been honest with both him and Harry from the start. Now he had to deal with a terrified son, who he thought he would be close with.

"If that is what you want."

"No, please Professor, don't leave me. He's going to kill me, just like Uncle Vernon would have done. You can't leave. I already promised I'll be good." Harry's face was pale, and sweat was pouring down it in great wet drops.

Seeing his son in a state, he said calmly. "Albus you will leave, and Harry and I are going to have a little chat. Something that should have been done a long long time ago."

Harry did not like the sound of that, the last time those words were spoken Dumbledore was telling him about the prophecy and in the end either he would be murdered, or have to murder somebody else.

"No I want him to stay." He cried.

"Harry this is important I need to talk to you privately before everything becomes distorted once more." James made another attempt to reach his son.

"Don't come near me!" Harry cried. He feared that the potions master would do to him what his uncle did. He was a freak and he deserved no less, but he was hurt and he did not want it happening again. He understood that it was his magic that was giving him the strength to fight and defend himself. If it was not for that he would have died a long time ago.

"Harry, my dear boy," Dumbledore reached down beside Harry and spoke softly, "I will leave you because Severus here is right there is a lot that you two need to discuss and it would be a lot easier if I was not around when you two talked."

"Fine." Harry replied brokenly. He knew it would be better to agree with Dumbledore, every time he tried to argue with the old man he lost.

Dumbledore left a resigned Harry and a fearful Severus to talk about their relationship towards one another.

“How dare you, you insolent little brat, I have every right to call you what I want to, and if I so desired I have every right to throttle your little neck. If anyone should be blamed for Sirius’ death it rests only on you.” James could not stop those words coming from his mouth. He had been angry with Harry for accusing him of killing his best friend and he had forgotten that Harry still did not know whom he was talking to. Yet James just made the biggest mistake of his life when he saw the fear run through his son’s eyes.

His hands flew to his mouth to cover them, but then he let go to stop his error. "Oh Merlin. Harry I'm so sorry. It was a slip of the tongue."

"Get away from me." Harry spat venomously. "GET AWAY!" He kicked his legs out again and tried to harm the man in front of him

James had no idea what to do, he backed up a little away from the flailing legs, but he refused to leave Harry's side his son was too distressed and it was all because of him.

He was relieved when Madame Pomfrey came storming into the infirmary.

She had been away at St. Mungo's helping the Medi Witches and Wizards. They were short staffed there and needed extra hands. She had assumed that her patient would be taken care of by the headmaster and his father, had the boy awoken when she was not there, how unmistakably wrong she was.

"What in Merlin's name is going on here?" She tried to keep her voice calm and steady as to not startle Harry anymore.

When neither of the men said anything she flicked her wand and Harry was tucked tightly into the hospital bed, where he found he could not move.

"I have restrained them so that it will keep you in bed young man, you were not supposed to be out." She then turned and faced Slytherin's head of house. "And you," She admonished. "What do you think you're doing? Especially since you know who you are and he has absolutely no clue. What did you do to the boy?"

James' beetle black eyes looked at his squirming son, who was trying to still fight against the constricting bed sheets. "I yelled at him." He said broken-heartedly. "Then threatened him. Then I blamed him for Sirius' death."

"You did what?" Madame Pomfrey looked astonished at the man before her. "I thought you had more common sense than that. But since he's awake and you've caused this mess, then you can fix it. I will not help you, and I refuse to show you any pity. Just get my



patient better before I come back or else.” She stormed out of the wing in a huff, the threat left hanging in the air.

“Harry,” He spoke cautiously.

“Get it over with then. Let’s go.”

“Get what over with.” James looked at his son puzzled.

“The throttling. Uncle Vernon beat me a lot so I’m used to it. C’mon, Sir, isn’t that what you’ve always wanted?”

“No Harry it’s not.”

The boy looked away, pain was written all over his face, it broke James’ heart to know that he was the one that put it there.

Harry sneered at the man standing before him. He knew he was being lied to, any minute that promised throttling would come. He wanted the comfort the he once felt, he wanted to feel protected and loved, and instead every turn in his life he was faced with hatred that was directly aimed towards him, why should his professor be any different.

“Harry there are things you do not understand, things I did not understand. Things that were revealed to me just a few days ago, and had I known what I am going to reveal to you I would have done everything in my powers to protect you. I swear. What I said just now was the biggest mistake I could have made and I’m sorry.”

Harry turned his face away from the professor, and did not answer him back. He did not want to hear what the professor had to say to him, he just wanted to go to sleep.

“Harry it is time. Look at me and I will show you what this is all about. In the end I promise it will be worth it.”

Harry reluctantly turned his face towards the potions master. Curiosity always seemed to get the better of him.

He stared attentively and waited for what would happen next. He was nearly ready to laugh when he saw Snape make a face like he was constipated.

His feelings changed from one that was laughable to one of utmost horror. Standing in front of him was his father.

“NOOO.”  
He screamed. Harry could not take in what he was seeing. His father alive. His father standing before his eyes. His father that threatened to do what his Uncle Vernon had done. His father who he had once admired was now the cause of some of the hurt that he was feeling.

“Harry.” He said quietly, “Son I am so sorry, for everything.” He made to approach his still tightly wrapped son, but stopped short when another ear splitting scream reached his ears.

Harry collected himself and knew from what he saw in his father’s eyes that this was not a joke, but the truth.

“NOOOOOO! You. Are. Not. My. Father.” He turned his face on the pillow and tears streamed down from his eyes.

James was thunderstruck. He thought that his son would forgive him now that he had shown his true face; he did not think that this was the reaction that he would get. He tried to look at the emerald green eyes that seemed resolute to not look in his direction. Lily’s eyes, his one true love, how Lily would have been so disappointed in him.

“Harry it’s true, if you don’t believe me I’ll take you into the pensieve myself, and you can see the truth for yourself.”

“I don’t want to see anything, I don’t want you, and I don’t need you. I already have everybody I need.”

James felt as if he had been struck in the face, and he crumpled in the seat by the bed.

Harry watched as his father felt defeated. His father had caused him so much pain, he reminded Harry that he was and always has been a

freak. “Hermione and Ron, and the rest of the Weasley’s are the only family that I need.”

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Up in the common room the portrait of the fat lady swung open giving the five people in the room permission to leave.

“That’s weird.” Hermione’s muffled voice awoke the rest of the party.

Fred fell off the couch and landed on Ginny, squashing her in surprise, from the interruption of sleep.

“Gerrof me.” She shoved Fred off of her compressed body.

"Sorry." He mumbled his apologies.

“What’s up Mione?” Ron asked his girlfriend from beside her on the puffy chintz chair. He absently started brushing a loose strand of hair off her face when he saw how distressed she had become.

Hermione pointed at the door, indicating that they were finally allowed to leave.

They all scrambled from their respective seats and made their way to the infirmary. They all paused in confusion when they reached Harry's bed.

Harry was trembling in his sheets, and could not move, and James was like a puddle in the chair tear streaks stained his face.

“Harry what happened?” Ginny cried. She wanted to rush to him and wrap her arms protectively over the boy she loved, and that’s what she did.

Harry allowed Ginny to take control and found that he actually liked the small red haired Weasley girl. He liked the way her arms fit perfectly around him, and how she whispered soothing words of comfort in his ears.

“Shhhh, Harry it will be alright, nothings going to happen to you ever again. I promise.”

The stunned occupants in the room watched as Harry's face relaxed.

“Hey mate.” Ron said a little bit uncomfortably. “Glad you’re back with us.”

Harry looked over his shoulders and for the first time since he woke he gave a genuine smile. As soon as the smile appeared it hastened away at the sight of James.

"I don't want him here." Harry said pointing a finger at James, to make sure that nobody would think those words were meant for them.

"But Harry he's your father." Ginny protested in their embrace.

“Make him leave, I don’t care who he is. He is not my father.”

“Harry...” Hermione began.

"It's ok, Hermione, I'm going. Harry I'll see you later son."

"I'm not your son." He said as James walked out the door.

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James' shoulder slumped in defeat as he made his way out the door he knew it would be better not to push his son, and he prayed that sooner or later Harry would forgive him for what he had done.

He climbed into bed and grabbed for a picture of him and Lily on his nightstand. "Oh Lils, I did the most horrible thing I could do to our son. I am worse than his uncle. I wish you were here; I need you my beautiful darling. I need you more then ever. Please help me make things right. Help me make things right between our son and me. I am so sorry Lily, so sorry. Please forgive me for hurting him, please." Tears rolled down his face and for once throughout this whole ordeal James Potter wished that he could just die.

The little dragon slipped from his perch and made his way out of Hogwarts and into Hogsmeade, where he apparated back to where his new master would be waiting for him.

“Enter.” Said the man who Draco knew had sensed him come to his door.

Draco hesitantly entered the room, but when he saw the snake like man at the desk he puffed out his chest and went inside. He knew that the information that he brought might lead to his untimely death. He had disobeyed orders and he was leaving his post unguarded. He kneeled down and kissed his Master's robe.

"So Draco, what brings you back here so soon? Your reasons better be good, or I can promise you pain beyond pain." He hissed at the younger Malfoy.

"It is my Lord. I would never have abandoned my post if I did not think it was unimportant. I know of the consequences too my Lord, and I promise you the news will be worth my absence at Hogwarts."

"I will be the judge of that. What's the news?"

Draco got up from his kneeling position on the floor and faced his Master head held high. "It is Potter, my Lord, he has awoken and has seen his father."

This news had startled Voldemort. He had known Potter was not well off at the moment, and he thought that it would be awhile longer until he regained consciousness. Now for the fact that the two Potters had been reunited did not sit well with the dark lord. His plans must soon be put into action.

"Is that all the news you have for me?" His voice was stoic; he did not want the Malfoy child to know how important the news actually was.

"No, my Lord, that's not all." There was a slight pause from Draco as he waited for his Lord to give him permission to continue on.

"Do not waste my time Draco. I am very busy, tell me, what other news have you."

"Harry is ignoring and fighting his father, every chance he gets. For some reason he doesn't want to have anything to do with James, and before I came he had kicked his father out of the room."

The second part of the news had surprised Voldemort even more than the first part. Voldemort could not for the likes of him understand

why Potter would refuse his father, when he yearned so much for a family. It was truly puzzling; Potter apparently always seemed to have something else up his sleeve.

The information had been perfect, at first he thought that all his carefully constructed planning had been for naught, now, however, he would be able to go along with his plans and finish the Potter brat and his father once and for all. Then with Potter out of the way the whole wizarding world would be his, not just Britain.

“You have done well Draco, I am pleased. You’re father will be informed of how well you are doing. Now leave, but do not leave your post for any reason whatsoever. I repeat do not.”

Draco did not want to disobey the Dark Lord he was too frightened to. Very cautiously Draco asked, "But what if something like this happens again? How can I contact you my Lord?"

Voldemort threw something at Draco, and with his abilities as a seeker caught it in one swift motion.

"It is a pendant," Voldemort explained. "Wear it around your neck and if you need to get in contact with me all you have to do is think the name 'Nagini' and it will allow for us to communicate together through its link."

Draco placed the pendant around his neck, kissed the hem of the Dark Lords robes and was back at Hogwarts infirmary in his small dragon form atop his perch before anyone could say the word 'Blast - Ended Skrewts'.

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Harry lay still on his bed. Not noticing the people that were in the room with him. His eyes were looking up at the ceiling and he had not blinked or moved once, since Ginny had moved away from him after their embrace, and James had left. He seemed oblivious to all that was going on around him, even though it was not much.

He wanted to be left alone. One thought crossing his mind. It would not be fair, and it would not be right, but it was still the better choice. In every turn in his life, he was somehow damaging everybody that he loved, and he could not take it anymore. He wanted everything to go away. He just wanted to die. He did not want to have to face Voldemort, or his father, he did not want to face his friends or his enemy, he did not want to exist in his life anymore. He had enough. Everything was ruined and he felt himself splitting into millions of pieces.

Harry thought it would be for the best. Dumbledore would be able to conquer Voldemort, since he was the only person that he ever feared, and everybody would live happily ever after without him. His father seemed to want him dead anyways, he already shown his true colours and was more like his Uncle Vernon in more ways than one.

A serene smile played across his lips, he would finally be free to spread his wings. He would be able to do everything he ever dreamed of and more, much much more. Heaven would be beautiful, and he could hardly wait. He pictured Hedwig flying down to greet him, nipping his finger in her usual affectionate way. Sirius as snuffles knocking him down into a pillow of white soft fluffy clouds. And his mother enveloping him into a safe warm hug, the one he felt when he was asleep. He would be able to fly on his broom for hours, play Quidditch whenever he wanted to, and have as much chocolate frogs as he desired. Yes everything would be perfect there, and nothing could stop him. He knew Madame Pomfrey was away and all he had to do was wait for all of his friends to leave, so he could be alone, without anyone stopping him.

"Harry?" Ron called. He had become concerned when Harry had not moved for almost twenty minutes.

Harry focused on his friends face, he wanted to make it seem that nothing was wrong, and he had to make it believable.

"Yeah," He croaked out his voice raw, from the screaming that it endured during the night.

"Nothing. Never mind."



"So mum says that we can make a trip to Diagon Alley in two weeks if you're better." Ginny said uncomfortably.

Harry felt a pang of guilt run through his body. In two weeks he would not be here, in two days he would not be here. He smiled at the redheaded girl "That'll be great. Maybe I can get another pet. I was thinking of getting a frog. Trevor could use a partner in crime." He thought of Neville's frog, and how it always managed to get lost.

"A frog!" Ron exclaimed. "You can do better than a frog. Why not get another owl, I'm sure they have a few that looks like Hedwig there, you can get another snow owl."

Harry's eyes turned away from the groups. Sometimes his friend could be the most idiotic person alive. "Nothing can take the place of Hedwig, Ron. I've had an owl, I don't feel like getting another one."

"Right, sorry." He mumbled.

"Ron do you ever consider to stop and think what you're saying before you say it?" Hermione asked him scathingly.

"Sometimes." And with that followed a smack upside his head.

"What was that for?" He asked her, rubbing his now sore head, a look of hurt shone in his eyes.

"For being you." Came her reply.

"Listen guys." Harry started before an argument could break out, "I'm really tired, and I didn't get much sleep last night. Do you mind leaving? Madame Pomfrey says I need to rest."

"Sorry, Harry, Dear. We should've realized you were tired. We'll leave you alone. Get some sleep and we'll come back in a couple of hours to eat with you. The rest of you hush no more noise." Mrs. Weasley turned on the group.

"Mione, stay a minute." Harry pleaded with her, if this was going to work he needed to be able to move and get out of the bed.

“What is it Harry.” She watched as the others went away from the infirmary.

“Would you mind just dropping the spell Pomfrey placed on the sheets, I won’t get up don’t worry, it’s just kind of uncomfortable, and I won’t be able to sleep like this.” He said trying to win her over with sympathy.

“Sure Harry.” She pointed her wand and instantly the bed sheets stopped clinging to him.

"Thanks." He mumbled. "For everything."

“You’re welcome Harry.” She hugged him and left, feeling like something strange was going to happen soon. It felt like this would be the last time she ever saw her friend again. She shook her head it was silly, but still.

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Harry watched as his last friend left the room. He felt tears in his eyes, but willed himself not to cry, this would be the last time he ever saw anyone of them again. He had forgotten that he would be leaving them behind, but if he did not then they themselves would end up dying because of him, this way was better. He reassured himself.

He felt an immense relief now that he was able to talk himself back into doing what he was going to do, and knowing that he was alone. Nobody would come to stop him or be able to. The one thing he had over his life, and he was now determined to go through with it.

Harry stepped carefully out of the bed lest someone heard him. He made his way quietly to the washroom. The object of his desire lay on the counter, so shiny and smooth. It glistened like a diamond in the darken lavatory. He was thankful to the person who left it there.

With a shaky hand Harry picked up the scissors. It dropped to the floor with a loud crash. His heart stopped momentarily as he thought that that bang would have people running, but several minutes later it seemed to be safe.

This time with a steadier hand, Harry placed the sharp tip of the scissors at the vein of his wrist with a deep breath he plunged in deep and hard, hitting the artery in his arm. Once he got his target he sliced his arm up and down. Heavy blood spurted everywhere, hitting the fans, the ceiling, the walls. Harry dropped to the ground panting hard he lay in the darkness spread eagle on the floor. His arm pumping out his precious blood, releasing him from all his pain.

He did not know how long it would take for him to be gone from his miserable existence, but he hoped it would be soon, as he began to feel cold. His heart started beating fast, rocking his whole body. Coldness enveloped him, and he felt like he was floating. "It won't be long now." He thought to himself. "Freedom." Was the last word he remembered as tiredness took over his body, and he lost sight of reality.

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James could not sleep; his son's rejection tore his heart in two. He did deserve it and he knew it. After the way he treated Harry he would not be surprised if Harry never forgave him.

He closed his eyes once more, hoping for sleep to come and in the morning he would see his beautiful son, and maybe, just maybe there would not be so much hostility aimed his way.

Sleep would not come; it had been a losing battle. He should never have entered it in the first place.

“Linx!” He called to the house – elf, which had been assigned to take care of James’ need.

“Yes, Master Potter, Sir. How can Linx help you, Sir?” The house – elf squeaked. Twisting his Hogwarts encrusted tea cosy in his wrung hands.

“Could you get me some coffee please? Two creams and a teaspoon of sugar.” He asked the house – elf politely. He was brought up to treat every living thing as an equal, his parents had taught him that nothing, not even animals should be treated as if they were higher or

less than you. All living things should be treated as an equal, no matter their position. He was glad to see that Harry had been taught the same respect that he had been. Every creature was invaluable, and if all the wizards felt that way needless lives could have been saved.

“Yes, of course, Master Potter. As you wish, Sir. Linx will get it right away.” And with that a loud crack was heard and reheard as Linx was back within a flash of a second, carrying a hot tray that contained coffee and what looked like a mountain made of chocolate scones.

“Linx thought that Master Potter would like something warm with his coffee. So Linx has brought Master Potter some chocolate scones.”

“Thank You Linx. You can leave it there for me on the table.”

Linx placed the tray down and popped away. James was once again by his lonesome.

He sat down at the table and flipped through old books as he ate the scones and drank his tea. Looking at one particular potions book, a slip of paper fell out from between the pages. He picked it up nimbly with his fingers, and when he unfolded the creased paper a small surprise of 'oh' circled his lips.

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The feeling was sensational. Harry was drifting from consciousness to semi – consciousness. The ride was terrifying, but beautiful at the same time. In bouts of consciousness he felt as if he could fly. He felt so separated from his body; it was the most incredible feeling ever.

Then the real pain would hit, stronger than what his uncle had ever done to him. His heart would start pounding and he would feel as if he had just run a twenty-mile race. Every time his heart would do this blood would pump out of his arm more rapidly than what it was already doing. He was astonished at how much blood his small body actually held.

He remembered his old days at his English elementary school when the subject of suicide had been brought up. A kid mentioned that



son moment between the two. And now it seemed that he had lost Harry forever.

He remembered third year when Harry had said he saw Wormtail on the Marauder's map, Lupin had come to him afterwards to tell him of his findings. Snape had turned Lupin away, saying that Wormtail was dead. It never dawned on him until tonight how curious that was. How the map had been able to show Scabbers as Wormtail, and not Snape as James. James pondered that and the only revolution that he could make was that Wormtail still had his soul, his spirit, his own memory's and throughout the time as Scabbers he still remembered who he was. James on the other hand could not remember who he was and his whole life was gone, except for the little bit that kept him from harming Harry in anyway. Making the Marauder's map was tricky. The map could only read the person's soul/or spirit (if it was dead) so if the person was in disguise it would be able to match the person as his/her true self, because that person knew who he or she was, but if the person was in disguise and truly thought they were that person (without any of their real memories intact) that they were disguised as, then the map would read as if that person truly existed not the actual person. It had been a clever idea when they made the map, and James smiled proudly as he remembered.

He scanned the map from where he was at the table he saw that he finally existed as a person, because where he sat it no longer read Severus Snape it read James Potter. He soon found Harry. He was a little taken aback when he saw that Harry was not in his bed, but was relieved when he found his son was just in the lavatory. He waited for the little dot to move back to the bed but it did not. When the little dot just stayed that way for half an hour he became really worried, but at the same time decided nothing of it, Harry just might have been having a bath. An hour passed and still nothing, now James was getting really worried. He decided to give Harry five more minutes and if he still had not come out from the lavatory he would see what was going on, and then he would try to rectify all the wrong doings he had done to Harry, in hopes to start afresh.

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Harry did not know how long he had been lying there on the floor, but it felt like hours. He knew his time was coming, and an immense relief flooded over him.

A white light appeared before his closed eyes. He hitched his breath and he felt himself being carried away. At last peace had come to claim him.

A person made his or her way through to meet him half way. He could not tell who it was everything was still a little blurry. When he got closer it was a person, and instantaneously he was able to tell who that person was. He had seen her in his dreams many times before. Had wished so many times on fallen stars to have her hold him in her arms, and now she was everything that he envisioned her to be. Emerald green eyes stared back at a matching pair of emerald green eyes.

“Mum.” He whispered so quietly.

She nodded her head and spread her arms wide. Harry ran into those welcoming arms, feeling of love and warmth spread over him. This was how he felt when he was in the coma. “MUM” He cried. Not caring anymore, he had his mother back.

“Shh...baby. Don’t cry.” She soothed him. Running small circles across his back in a comforting way. Soon his crying turned into small hiccoughs and he laid his tired head on her shoulders, allowing her to continue the soft comforting motion on his back.

“Harry, my beautiful son, what have you done to yourself?” She asked, with a sorrow filled voice.

Silence he did not want to talk. He wanted to stay like this forever, for eternity. “I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, as long as I’m living my baby you’ll be.” Lily sang to her son. Her beautiful voice rang throughout the silence. She had not sung this song to her child since he was a baby and she missed it so much.

Lily held her broken son in her arms; she knew that he would not be able to stay with him. It was still not his time. Any minute she knew

that her beloved husband would find him, and then their time together would end. They could not be together not yet. The time was not right.

Lily took Harry's head into both her hands. He tried to fight to gain back the contact; he had missed so much of in his short life. But her strong hands did not let him go.

"Harry, my darling son. You must listen to me. You have to go back, it is not your time. Your father needs you more than ever. Give him a chance."

Harry's emerald eyes darkened, he did not want to give his father a chance, he did not want to have anything to do with his father, he wanted to be with his mother. One of the few people in his life who had never betrayed him, the one person who had sacrificed everything to save him from death, he liked it here, and there was no way that he was going back there.

"I want to stay here with you." He cried, hugging her tightly around the neck, breaking free of her tender hold on his face.

"You can't Harry. You don't know everything yet. You have no clue what your father has been through in order for you to survive. Please my baby boy, listen to your father, he will explain everything to you, I'm so sorry Harry that I could not be there for you. Just know that I love you."

"No, he betrayed me. Just like everybody else back there has. I want to stay here where nobody can lie or hurt me anymore. Mum, I want to be free." He pleaded with his mother to understand him, to give in and say that everything was alright and he could stay here with her, and then they would leave and everything would be perfect.

"I'm sorry Harry you can't. Not just yet. Hey," She said with a smile, "Has anybody told you, you look like your father."

Harry had to smile at this, of course everybody said that, but to hear his mother saying this to him, like it was a joke, brought a huge grin to his face, "Except I have your eyes." He told her playfully. "Everybody says that as well."



"I bet they do." She told him teasingly. "Harry I have to go now, but remember my son that I love you, and I am so proud of you. So are Sirius, Severus, and your grandparents, even Hedwig. We are all so proud of you."

“Mum, don’t go.” Harry said as she dimmed away, along with the bright light.

“Always love you.” A ghostly whisper echoed through his ears.

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Harry's eyes popped open. He was not on the washroom floor as he was supposed to be; instead he was in his bed, tucked in once more, so that he could not move.

He did not open or make a sound; he did not want to have anybody coming in. He was ashamed for what he did. How could he try to take his life? Tears clung to his eyelashes as a new round of tears tried to break free. He would not cry, he would not cry. He had shown enough weakness for one night, he would not show anymore.

He looked down, his cut arm had been bandaged in thick white gauze, there was a small patch of red, but not a whole lot. He noticed a bottle of blood replenishing potions on his nightstand. "So somebody found him then." He thought to himself. Forgetting that his mother told him his father would be the one to find him.

“Welcome back Mr. Potter.” Kingsley Shacklebolt emerged from behind the curtains.

“Whaa...Whooo?” Harry tried to form the question about how he had been saved from certain death, but he seemed unable to form that particular question.

“You are a very lucky young man, Harry.” Kingsley said, “If it was not for your father you would certainly not be here now.” He said.

“I wasn’t planning on being here. If it wasn’t for my father I would have been where I wanted to be.” He snarled. His father once again seemed to have ruined everything for him.

“You are a very selfish person, Harry. I would never have expected this from you.”

Harry was startled by Kingsley's words. This was the last thing that he expected Kingsley to say to him. "Me selfish? What do you know? You know nothing. NOTHING about me. You've only known me for a year and even for the year we never saw each other often."

“I know that you almost killed the man that cares for you more than anything in the world. I know that James was the one who found you. Your blood splashing the walls, it was he who mended your cut. It was he who had to clean up your spilt blood, and it was he who called for me.”

“Well now that I’m awake you can leave, Shacklebolt.”

"I'm not working for you Mr. Potter. You're father and the headmaster both assigned me to you. I will be your new 'friend' for the time being, and I will be staying here, otherwise to St. Mungo's you go. You will not be going anywhere, without me, you will not even move a finger without me knowing, and I will know. Listen to me as a friend." Kingsley sighed out of sympathy and worry. "Your father is sleeping right now, after everything that he has witnessed try to be more understanding towards him, and give him a chance. I know for a fact there's something he needs to discuss with you, he loves you a lot Harry."

The last sentence struck a nerve as Harry remembered the last few things his mother told him. He sighed and faced the window, staring out at the great lake. The giant squid was diving back and forth in the water; he let his mind wander drowning out Kingsley's words.

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While Kingsley Shacklebolt watched guard over Harry, Albus Dumbledore watched guard over James. James was given a

sleepless dream potion to help him forget the turn of events that transpired that day.

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James had given Harry the five minutes like he promised, but when he saw that Harry still had not moved he went down to the infirmary.

When he got to the infirmary, he was a little bit ragged, but he just figured that maybe Harry had went to take a bath and fallen asleep and fallen asleep in the tub. He knew that the water could be soothe a body. By the time he had entered the lavatory he was calm expecting to see his son dozing.

What he did not expect was to find his son lying in a pool of his own blood. His body had become a pale translucent white, his lips a bluish/purplish hue, and his breathing very still. He ran to his son's side ignoring the blood splattered walls and floor in which he stepped in and leaned against. He held his son's wrist and saw the cut that had ripped through his arm and artery. If it were not for his auror training he would never had known what to do, but because of that he was able to mend the shattered artery and the split skin within seconds. The blood did not stop instantaneously, there was still a little bit of oozing, but nothing serious, all James had to do was conjure a thick gauze bandage and wrap it around the wrist, applying pressure in order for the blood to fully stop. He put two fingers against Harry's other wrist, the uninjured one, searching for a pulse. He almost toppled over when he found a small, but very faint pulse. If he had come within two seconds later he knew that Harry would be dead. He quickly 'accioed' a blood replenishing potion, and forced Harry to swallow it, by tilting Harry's head back, pouring the contents into his mouth and rubbing his throat for the boy to drink. When James was content and he felt Harry's pulse begin to grow stronger, he let his son down, and he cleaned up the mess Harry's blood had made. He placed his son in his bed, and put the same charm on the blankets that Madame Pomfrey had done, so that Harry could not escape or try to do something like that again. He sat in the chair by the bed and fell into a fitful sleep.

It had been Dumbledore who had found James screaming his voice raw, something about Harry harming himself, and why would he choose to do that. Gently Albus shook James by the shoulders to awaken him.

Albus gave a look of disbelief, but when he saw the boy's bandaged wrist he knew that James was indeed telling the truth. It was then that Albus suggested getting Harry twenty-four hours around the clock watch, just in case he tried to do it again. James at first refused, he was shaken up, but he still wanted to be there for Harry, he did not want Harry to think that he was being abandoned in his time of need. He reluctantly agreed that it would be better to have someone there, and they both decided that it would be perfect if Kingsley were the one to watch over Harry.

When James was reassured that Kingsley would not leave his son alone for a single second without anybody else there to guard Harry. They had decided to let Tonks be the second to watch over Harry, and her and Kingsley would take turns monitoring the boy. Dumbledore led James back to his chamber, and just like James had done for Harry, Dumbledore did for James. He gave James a sleeping draught to let him have a goodnight sleep, and forget about the image of his only son on the verge of death.

The old wizard watched over James like a hawk. The man had been through so much in his life. Dumbledore wondered when his life

would get back on track. He wanted so many good things for the man before him.

“Everything will work out, you’ll see, in the end all the pieces will be put back together.” Dumbledore cooed to the sleeping man before him.

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While all this was going on in the castle the little dragon on his perch was sound asleep.

The Gryffindor common room was a silent place to be that night. None of the occupants had much to say. The only noise that could be heard was the scuffling of clothes or shoes against the couch or carpet, as the occupants moved to put themselves in a more comfortable position.

It was very late, but everyone refused to give in to sleep. It was more calming and peaceful just to be near one another, even though there was not much going on in that moment. Their only thoughts were on Harry and his recovery.

They all knew that Harry was lying to them when he told them he was tired. They just figured that he wanted to be alone. They would too if they were in his position. They valued his friendship more than all the galleons in the world. He was their protector, and never once did his loyalties to them ever waver. So they would show him the same treatment as he did to them.

"Hey anybody in the mood for a game of wizards chess." Ron asked from his spot on the floor. The mood in the common room was way too grave for his liking, considering that his best friend had finally woken up and soon things would turn back to normal. He felt like they should be celebrating, not acting so solemn. He could not tell what everyone's problem was that night.

"No." The voices rang across the room from several different places.

"Hey if you want something to do, you can help me with my Arithmancy assignment." Ginny called across to her brother from one of the desks.

"Gin, you know I've never taken that subject before. How on earth do you think I can help you with that." Ron looked startled at his sister, as if she had grown an extra head.

"Ohhh, Ginny, I'll help you, Arithmancy is my favourite subject." Hermione nearly knocked over George in her excitement to help Ginny do her homework. "Isn't Professor Vector the all time greatest. He has to be the smartest teacher Hogwarts has." Hermione gushed.

Ginny shuddered; realizing too late that it was a bad mistake mentioning anything to do with Arithmancy. "Actually Hermione, I think I figured it out. I don't think I need help, after all."

"No, no, Ginny, truly it's ok. I don't mind helping. I already did this class. With my help you'll be done in half an hour at the most."

Ginny turned pleading eyes on her three brothers. They all turned away, not meeting her eyes.

Hermione reached across the table and grabbed Ginny's assignment before Ginny could protest. "Ohh I remember doing this one, it's really easy Ginny, all you have to do is..."

"I really hope you don't plan on giving her the answer Miss. Granger." Professor Dumbledore called out to the oblivious teenagers.

Hermione blushed and covered her face with her thick bushy hair. "No-o-o, sir." She stammered. "I was just helping Ginny with her assignment."

"Help is all well and good, but there are boundaries that one shall not cross. It can become a thin line between helping and cheating. Please keep that in mind Miss. Granger."

"I will Headmaster."

"Good."

Everybody turned around to stare at each other. Nobody could figure out why Dumbledore was there, unless he just came down to berate Hermione on the limits of helping.

"So I guess you're wondering why I'm here." Dumbledore asked his blue eyes twinkling.

Not a soul in the room was able to find their voice. They all could sense that even with the Headmaster's twinkling eyes, something else was wrong. They nodded, waiting for whatever would come.

Dumbledore made himself comfortable on one of the pouf chairs by the fireplace. "Why don't you all join me?" He asked. He drew up three more chairs out of thin air and placed it around his with his wand. Fred and George sat in the remaining poufs and Ron, Ginny, and Hermione sat in the recently conjured ones.

"The reason why I came here tonight is because of something grave that happened in the infirmary moments after you all had left this evening." Dumbledore waited for the onslaught of screams that was sure to follow. He was quite taken aback when there was no response from any of the people in the room. Then it dawned on him that their glazed looks were not from lack of sleep, but from fear, for their friend.

"Harry somehow managed to get out of his bed last night. How I don't know, considering the charm that was placed on his blankets. He should not have been able to even lift a finger, but that's beside the point. Unfortunately he was left by himself without any supervision. That was my fault and I take full responsibility for that." Dumbledore struggled with the next part. He was not sure if he himself could say anything, however, if Harry was going to heal than he would need all the friends he could get. "Now before I continue, you must all understand that what Harry has been through is very disconcerting, and he has been trying to deal with it the best way he knows how. With that in mind Harry tried to take his life during the night, he almost would have succeeded if Mr. Potter did not come right at the last moment and heal Harry's wounds."

The faces in the room looked at each other disbelieving. They all thought that it was some sort of sick joke. The person that the headmaster just described did not seem like the friend that they knew. They all knew that Harry would never give up on life. They had seen him through some of the worst times in his life and each time he fought hard, and he always came out on top.

"Great joke, Headmaster. So when's Harry getting released." Ron said almost hopefully.

"This is not a joke, I assure you all. He is right now in the hospital wing, and his release is uncertain."



Hermione began crying instantly in Ron's arms. Ron had tears in his eyes, but he refused to cry. Mentally he kept telling himself that Harry was fine, and his eyes refused to let his tears fall. Instead he concentrated on Hermione. He sat with her rubbing her back ever so gently, feeling her shuddering breathes each time. Fred and George just sat there stunned. They could not figure out why everything had to happen to Harry. This was even worse then the night they had gone to Privet Drive to save him. At least that time, it would not have been his fault; this time their 'brother' had tried to take his own life. Their faces wore an identical shade of pale white, not moving, not crying. Ginny was the only one who seemed to not have any reaction to Dumbledore's news. She could not believe him until she saw him with her own eyes.

They were all brought out of their reveries when Dumbledore seemed to continue with his speech. "However, I would think it best if you all went down and tried to cheer him up. My suggestion is that you all go outside and maybe try a game of Quidditch. That would make him happy, and it would help take his mind off of everything. Just try not to let on that you know what he did. He would not like it one bit."

Again all the faces in the room looked around perplexedly at one another. How could the headmaster tell them such news and act as if nothing happened?

"Now that's a joke." Ginny screamed from where she was sitting. "Harry can not play in his condition. Over my dead body will he be moved." Ginny's continued screaming made everybody cringe, even Dumbledore. Nobody now could deny that she sounded like Mrs. Weasley.

"Miss. Weasley let me ask you something." Dumbledore tried to get the young girl to calm down. All her yelling would wake the dead.

"What." She growled back.

"If you were the one who tried to take your life, and now you're sitting basically by yourself, would you rather be alone, where your mind could wander to about the next time you could be alone so you could take your life again, or would you rather have your friends by your side distracting you, having fun, acting your age?"

Ginny considered the question. On one hand she knew that deep inside she would want to be alone, she would not want anybody knowing, and if she was that depressed then she would want to be by herself to think about the next time, and how she could accomplish what she set out to do. This scared her more than when she found out that Tom Riddle was possessing her. The one person that she really cared for was by himself, and she knew what he was doing right at this moment.

"We'll do it." She said determinedly, shaking her head trying to get the previous thoughts out of her mind. It was the only chance that they would get to help save Harry's life for a change instead of one of theirs.

"No we won't." Protested Fred. "We already had to bring him here almost dead, we don't plan on doing it again." He seethed. Sometimes his sister could be so dense. "Harry needs to heal mentally before he goes anywhere."

"How do you know what he needs? The both of you have never really paid any attention to Harry before, except for the occasional banter." She pointed a long shaky finger at the twins.

"Know what? Do what you guys want exclude us out. We're not going to be the ones responsible for Harry having a drawback on his healing process." Fred was just as angry with his sister as she was at him.

"Ummm.... Fred.... I think it would be a good idea." George said softly. They usually never disagreed, but he had to side with Ginny on this one.

"Me too." Said Ron with a muffled voice, as it was covered with Hermione's hair.

Fred just glared at everybody he knew when he was defeated, and it was just one of those times.

Hermione did not say a word. She was still sobbing into Ron's shirt.

“Alright everyone since it’s settled, you may take Harry outside. Tell Kingsley that he has permission, if there’s any trouble you can reach me by floo in my office.” With a small smile and a nod, Dumbledore vanished before their eyes.

“Let’s go.” Said Ginny. “We can use the schools brooms.” She hurried out to make her way to the portrait of the fat lady, when she noticed that nobody was following her. “MOVE!” She shouted.

Fred and George jumped at her tone and hastily followed their younger sister out. Hermione needed a bit more persuading to get her to go.

After first trying to reassure her that Harry was fine, but still did not seem to work. Ron tried a different tactic saying that she could referee from the ground instead of having to play.

The others, who were waiting by the door, let out a burst of laughter, when the promise of refereeing was made. Hermione jumped off of Ron, wiped her eyes, and joined the Weasley's.

Ron mumbled something about how girls were so hard to figure out, as he joined his girlfriend and siblings. He knew today would end up being a very interesting day.

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“If only he hadn’t hesitated at first. If only he hadn’t dropped the scissors. If only...” Harry sat in bed, considering that he could not move, the game of “If only...” was running amok in his mind. He knew that if he had not screwed up and wasted time, he could be with his mother and every other being that had died because of him.

His mother had said that Sirius, Hedwig, his grandparents were there, but yet it was not his time. "Well why can't it be my time? Why can't I finally be able to find some peace?" He hit his sheets with a clenched fist. Not that it did much, but he needed to find a release on his emotions.

"Sorry Harry, did you say something?" Kingsley Shacklebolt asked him from beside his bed. "I was reading the prophet. Did you know that crumple horned snorkacks really do exist?" He laughed.

Whatever Harry was expecting Kingsley to say it was certainly not that. "Do they? That's interesting" He said in a dazed sort of voice, brushing Kingsley aside. He did not care; he only cared about when he would be alone next. He had to finish what he started.

"No I just thought it would be amusing to see what you'd do if I told you." Kingsley got the hint and went back to the prophet. He knew what Harry was wanting to do, as an Auror, he had seen many witches and wizards try to take their own lives, usually they got sent to St. Mungo's long term ward, but of course Harry was a different case. It would not look good if the Saviour of the wizarding world got sent to St. Mungo's for a suicide attempt. At least Harry was well guarded and safe this way.

Harry had to think, he needed away out. His eyes searched the room. The only way was the window, but he knew that was stupidity on his own part. Kingsley would see him trying to escape without even getting a finger on the latch. He was too smart for that. He had to think.

Kingsley observed the young man on the bed; he knew the boy was thinking about the best route to escape. He had not made top Auror

for nothing. It had become so easy to read people, without having to be a legilimens; it had to do with the eyes. The old saying was true; the eyes are the key to a person's soul. That is what he read. And from the look on Harry's face, he was like a muggle who just got caught by a Death Eater.

"Kingsley I have to use the washroom." Harry tried. He had to it was his only escape. Once he was safely in the washroom he could try sneaking back out of the room, and out the door. Crawling would work. Kingsley would be none the wiser.

"Harry, you just went not even half an hour ago." Bemused Kingsley grinned at the boy.

“But I have to go again.” Harry whined, hoping to become so annoying that Kingsley would just give in.

“Try to sleep Harry it would do you some good.”

“What about a shower. I think I’m allowed to do that at least.”

“You had one in the morning. You were asleep and Madame Pomfrey and I thought it would be best to give you one when you were sleeping.”

“I am not a kid, Shackbolt, let me out, or I’ll I’ll I’ll...” Harry could not finish the sentence he had no idea what he would do. In his position right now there was nothing that he could do. He was helpless like a newborn baby, and he felt violated at the thought of someone bathing him without him being aware of what they were doing.

“C’mon Harry, you’ll do what.” Kingsley was used to this, when he rescued victims, they would always threaten him, but it would be themselves that they threatened and never him.

“I’ll scream.” He said. He was smart enough to know that everytime he screamed someone came running. At this point in time he did not care who it was, just as long as he was able to convince his rescuer that he would be alright if he was by himself.

“Please don’t. I think my ears have finally had it. Not to mention I think Hogwarts walls will come crumbling down with another one of your famous yells.” George said from the doorway.

Harry just glared at his friends. He did not want them seeing him this way. He could sense that they were told about what he tried to do to himself, and he felt so ashamed, yet, at the same time he felt betrayed, and angry.

“What are you guys doing here?” He refused to look at them; instead he kept his eyes focused on a small hole in his blankets.

His friends made their way to the bed. “We came to collect you for a game of Quidditch.” Ron said, he cringed when he waited for an explosion to come out of his friend’s mouth.

This was what he was waiting for. A chance to escape, once outside he could break out of Hogwarts and leave, never to return again.

"You're on." Harry shouted full of enthusiasm.

"Hold up one second." Kingsley's voice boomed. "Harry is not going anywhere. He is supposed to remain in bed. Now you can either stay here and talk or you can leave. I hear that Diagon Alley is having a street sale this week, why not check it out." He thought the mention of the sale would drive the girls in the room mad with desire, making them take the boys with them.

"We know, but it doesn't seem like much fun. We'd rather stay here and play Quidditch." Hermione piped in. They all gave Hermione a puzzled look, except for Kingsley who had no idea how much the girl hated playing the game. She just shrugged her shoulders as if nothing strange was said.

"Ok, what about Weasley's Wizard Wheezes? You both will eventually need to check up on that place." He tried again.

"We've got an amazing sales clerk, who was recently hired. She's taking care of the business." Fred answered.

"Listen you can't go outside, not with Harry. His father and Albus will have my neck." Kingsley could just picture the look on James Potter's face when he was told that Harry was outside on his broom.

"We have permission from the Headmaster, it was his idea in the first place. If you don't believe him you can fire call his office. And when that is settled, we will play Quidditch." Ginny said determinedly.

"Fine, and if you guys are lying, I am warning you now, visiting privileges are over, until Harry has made a complete recovery." Kingsley picked up the floo powder and dropped to his knees. "Dumbledore, did you tell the Weasley clan it was ok for Harry to play Quidditch?"

"Yes, Kingsley, I thought it would be a great idea in fact, get the boys mind on other things, better than staying in a room where he feels like he's being suffocated. Don't you think?"

“What about James? What did he have to say about this?”

“James is sleeping, he’ll probably be out for quite awhile anyways, after last night. So he’ll never know. Just tell them that Harry has to be returned in two hours and that will take care of James from ever finding out.”

“But if he does, then it’s on your head, Albus.” And with that Kingsley Shacklebolt pulled his head from the fireplace. “You have permission, just be back in an hour and a half.” He gave them an extra half an hour leniency, in case they got too caught up in the game.

“Great, now can somebody get me out of here?” Harry asked.

“Sorry mate.” And Ron released his friend from the constricting blankets.

With a little help getting dressed by Fred and George. They all made their way down to the Quidditch pitch.

Kingsley Shacklebolt watching them disappear knowing full heartedly that this was going to end up being one bad mistake.

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After the fire call Dumbledore felt very pleased with himself. Soon enough the foolish boy would be feeling better, and he would have his “Saviour” back.

He did care for Harry, in a certain extent, but his main concern for the moment was getting rid of Voldemort, even if that meant using people to his own advantage. James was right. Harry was just a pawn, and each piece needed to move in a certain direction in order to win the game. And that is what Dumbledore was going to do was win the game.

He was very good at playing two people. Outside to the world, he was a loveable person, but here on his own, he could be just as vicious as the Dark Lord himself.

James' eyes flickered open. He had no clue how long he had been out, but he had to admit that this was the best sleep he had in a long time. The dreamless sleep worked wonders.

He changed his clothes, and went to the kitchens to get breakfast. As he was eating a nagging feeling was chewing at his stomach. It was like he was missing something important. He tried to remember what it was, but he could not place his finger on it.

“Hmm... No thank you Dobby. I’m fine.” He buttered his last remaining piece of toast, took a bite, and slowly chewed the piece in his mouth. Something did happen; he knew that for sure, but what? Then the events from the night before flashed before his eyes. Harry lying in the bathroom, his arm split open, blood everywhere. His son tried to kill himself.

He got to the Hospital wing and made a beeline straight for his son's bed. He was positive that Harry would be sitting up in bed, pouting of course, but still in there. When he got to the bed at last he was taken aback when there was no Harry or Kingsley there.

More than just a nervous panic James was now ready for a full-blown attack. He had no clue where Harry was, and the person that was



supposed to be watching him had disappeared to. There was no note; nothing to explain where Harry had went.

He had checked everywhere. There was only one last place to look. His eyes full of fear looked at the door in front of him. The lavatory.

That was the only place that Harry could be. He must have escaped the bed again, without any supervision Harry was free to do what he pleased, if he did get out.

James' hand slowly made it's way to the cold metal globe that was the handle. He pushed the door open, but as he did, he shut his eyes closed. He knew what he would see and he could not bear to witness it. He could just picture it. His son's still body, blue and cold, unmoving, lying down, emerald eyes cloudy and listless, an empty potions bottle lay in his limp hand. His son was able to finish what he started.

“Harry, no.” He cried into the darkened room. He could not picture it; he could not go through with it. He could not, but he had to. If his son was dead than he had to be there for him even in death.

He counted very slowly to ten, trying to control his ragged breathing. He carefully opened his eyes, and let out a deep breath of relief when he found it empty. Yet there was still the problem of finding his missing son. Where could Harry have gone?

He left the lavatory and was making his way out, wanting to go to the Gryffindor common rooms, in hopes that his friends knew where he was, when a figure on a broom went zooming by the window in a far off distance.

Even though the person was far from sight, James was able to recognize who that person was immediately. Panic turned to anger at his son. Now he could understand why “Severus” was always mad at Harry. Harry did have a way of breaking the rules and getting out of trouble. This was the last straw; James was going to take matters into his own hands.

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It was a perfect day for flying, clear blue skies, white fluffy clouds, and a nice summer breeze. From up above the world looked spectacular. It was heaven.

The six teens made their way to the Quidditch pitch. Harry sighed contentedly it was a beautiful day. He was so excited, that he even laughed as the others tried to persuade Hermione to play instead of referee, it turned out they were one man short, and they needed her to play.

"Mione if you play seeker I promise to give you the back rub you so desperately want." Ron tried to bribe his girlfriend.

"You will give it to me no matter what. Because there are also certain things that I can deny you Weasley." She bit back.

The twins snickered at their brother, and Ginny covered her mouth with her hand. Harry just rolled his eyes glad that something's never changed.

"If I agree to play, then I decide where we're going to go on our next date."

"Agreed." Ron took her lips in his, and kissed her deeply, sealing the deal.

Before heading out of Hogwarts they had figured out that they were one man short of even having two semi – made teams. With Hermione now in the game, each team would consist of three players: one keeper, one chaser, and one seeker. They had argued for a good couple of minutes about beaters, when five of the six agreed that it would be in Harry's best interest, and considering the lack of players playing the final vote was that no beaters would be used during the game.

Ginny left the group to try and calm Hermione down. Hermione was so nervous her teeth were chattering and her body was trembling. She hated flying. Ginny returned moments later carrying six brooms in her arms.

"Alright, everybody for themselves."

She laid the brooms on the ground and there was a mad rush of everybody trying to claim the better ones for themselves. Ginny of course got the nimbus, while the rest got either a cleansweep five, six, or seven. The only person who did not have a broom was Harry.

“That’s not fair Gin. Why do you get the Nimbus 2000?” Ron whined.

“Because I’m the one who had to get them in the first place.” She stuck her tongue out at him.

“Hey Harry there’s still a cleansweep five, you can use that.” George said. Pushing the broom into Harry’s hand.

“Huh?” He looked at the new object in his hand; he was unaware that anyone was talking to him. He was remembering the firebolt that Sirius had given him, and he felt his hot tears cowering in his eyes. He would not cry not today, not when he was close again to finding his dreams. Soon he would be with Sirius and not have to ever think about his Firebolt.

“Ok, Ron, Harry, and Ginny, will be one team. Me, Fred, and Hermione will be another.” George said as he mounted his broom. “Everybody mount your broom.”

They all listened to George and mounted their brooms; they then flew into the sky and took their respective positions in the air.

“I don’t like this.” Harry could hear Hermione wail on the other side of the pitch. He felt sorry for her; she was already closing her eyes, not a good sign to begin a game with. He would miss her the most; well of course, besides Ginny.

A magical gong erupted to signal the start of the game. The balls were let go, and they flew. Harry saw the golden snitch for a mere millisecond and then it was lost. No sweat he would find it sooner or later.

Harry rose higher in the air watching the games progress. He saw Fred and Ginny go for the Quaffle. Ginny grabbed it just as Fred’s fingers grazed the ball. She zoomed in the direction of Hermione’s goal, and scored, ten – zilch. Hermione did not seem to care, she

seemed happy enough to know that she was still alive. This was not what she would ever think of as fun, and this game was the easiest game a wizard/witch could play. A real game of Quidditch was ten times harder.

This is how the game went for an hour, until Harry spotted the snitch going past one of the many turrets of Hogwarts, leaving the Quidditch pitch far behind, but, yet, still visible at the same time. This was it if he was going to do it, now was his chance. He had the snitch where he wanted it. He zoomed on his broom and was glad to note that George had spotted the snitch to. He made to go as if to grab it, but purposefully fell off his broom.

The adrenaline that Harry felt while free falling was incredible. Nothing could stop him now, his friends did not have their wands on them and they would not be able to reach him in time. This was too perfect.

The other players stood frozen in time. They watched as Harry made to grab the snitch, and then horrifically as he fell off his broom. This was quite unusual for Harry because he had never had a fall like that before, unless they counted the time when the dementor's came onto the pitch in their third year.

They were all too far to go after Harry they would never in a million years make it in time. They did not know what to do. Harry had been right none of them thought of bringing their wands with them, Ron was able to remove Harry's blankets with a touch of his finger. The blankets were specially charmed so that anybody could move it unless it was Harry. It was a Quidditch game, and school was out, no wand would be needed. Besides, how much trouble could they get into at Hogwarts, one of the safest places a person could be?

"Harry." Ginny screamed from across the pitch.

Seconds after Ginny screamed Harry's body immediately started floating on it's own accord, not moving, stunned.

They all rushed over to their friend who was spookily floating in midair.

James looked out of the window ready to go collect the boy and bring him back to his room. He was so furious. He could feel his magic radiating off of his body. He made his way down the cold stone steps of Hogwarts castle when he heard a girl shout his son's name. He ran back up to the window to see what was going on. He was ready to curse something, anything, when he saw his son's body fall to the ground below. With a wave of his wand James put a hovering spell mixed with a stunning spell on Harry's body. Harry's body stopped moving. Relief flooded his system now. He swore once he got his son back to safety he would kill him himself with his bare hands. These past few days with Harry had been more exhausting then the days with Harry as Severus. What a simpler time that was, and just for a fleeting moment James still wished he was Severus.

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“What do we do now?” Hermione shrieked at them. “We should have listened to Fred when he said that this wasn’t a good idea. Now we lost Harry, Professor Dumbledore is going to kill us. We’ll be expelled for sure, and you two will never be allowed to come visit Hogwarts again. We’ll be outcasts... We’ll have our wands snapped, We’ll.”

“Hermione SHUT UP!” Ginny shouted at her friend. “First off we won’t be expelled because if you didn’t notice it was Mr. Potter that took Harry, and he has every right to, but what we do need to do is go talk to Professor Dumbledore and tell him what happened.”

They all flew to the open window and headed for the Headmaster's office.

“Does anybody know the password?” Ron asked, as they stared dumbly at the unmoving stone gargoyles.

"Nope not a clue, bro." George told his younger brother.

“We’re not going to get anywhere by standing here. We can use the fireplace to call him.” Hermione said in her know – it – all voice.

And that's what they used.

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It was now almost time for them to return and Albus Dumbledore waited for news from Kingsley to let him know that he returned safely from his trip to Number Twelve Grimmauld Place, and that Harry was in his hospital bed.

“Ahh Fawkes. You are a good Phoenix. Don’t you worry my precious one, soon the dark side we’ll be gone forever, I can feel it. Then we can all be free and happy.” He gave Fawkes a treat. Fawkes took it gratefully and trilled her thanks to her master.

“Hum Hum.” A voice in the floo made Albus jump in surprise. He was not expecting a floo call, and it sounded very much like Dolores Umbridge. He shuddered thinking of the toad like woman. She was probably sent here on news from the ministry.

He plastered a fake smile on his face, hoping that what she had to say would not take too long, he could not put up with her for great lengths. He turned around and jumped back in surprise. It was not Umbridge after all it was Ginny Weasley.

“Headmaster we need to see you immediately.” She said urgently.

“Where are you?”

"We're all in the infirmary. Please, Sir, it's important."

"I'll be right there, but Ms. Weasley."

“Yes, sir.”

"You need to move so I can get through." Dumbledore said chuckling.

Ginny's head popped out of the fireplace making it safe for Albus to go see what the problem was.

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Albuslanded in the infirmary gracefully and took notice of all of the distressed faces looking at him.

Hermione was the first one to come to him, shaking, and obviously scared. "Please Headmaster. Don't expel us, we didn't mean for it to happen."

He raised his bushy grey eyebrows up at her amusedly. He had no idea what the young lady was trying to tell him.

“Will somebody please explain to me what happened?”

Loud strong voices rang throughout the Infirmary. Each telling the headmaster what happened during the Quidditch game.

When they were done explaining. The headmaster turned from them and without a word went back to his office.

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With the first shriek of “Harry” the miniscule dragon turned in his sleep. Now he could hear the distinct voices of the people in the room. His eyes opened and he noticed the sun high in the air. He had slept through the night and most of the day. He was going to be in so much trouble if the Dark Lord ever found out. The words “Harry’s gone, Mr. Potter took him away” caught his attention once more. He looked around the room thinking that he was bound to see his wayward rival, but he was not there. Now not only was he in trouble he was one dead dragon.

He listened to the conversation, and heard how Harry fell off his broom, and James came to save him, and then they both apparated away. Somehow the topic changed to suicide, and then Draco finally understood that while he was sleeping not only did Harry vanish along with his father, but he also tried to kill himself last night.

At least now Draco was filled in so he could give a detailed report about the happenings at Hogwarts. He sighed a huge sigh of relief. And curled himself up and went back to sleep. He would be ready when the Dark Lord called.

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After leaving the party at the infirmary. Dumbledore paced his office. He was mad. James pulled one over on him. He had to do something. He needed to find James and then erase his memories, and then turn him back into Snape and have him arrested for kidnapping Harry. That could work. He had to inform the ministry at once. He was not worried about the ministry finding Harry before him, he would find him first, and the ministry just needed to have a heads up.

Yes, he did love both men very much, but the wizarding world was more important, and he was willing to gamble both their lives to save hundreds more. This had to be done.

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The dark Lord sat in his throne watching the death eaters leave the room. He had called a meeting early in the morning and five hours later it finally wrapped up.

He was on edge today. During the meeting he felt a weird feeling wash over his body. He did not know where this feeling came from, but it made him feel nervous. His stomach felt like it was falling very far, but that was impossible because his feet were planted firmly on the ground. Then last night he also felt a weird sensation like something was digging at his arm, but when he looked down his arm was fine. He was confused, he thought the meeting would put everything straight, and maybe find out if there was a traitor amongst



him, who had put him under some sort of curse, but when he legitimized everybody, nothing came up.

He needed to speak with the younger Malfoy. Even though the meeting from the previous day went much better than he thought it would, he needed to make sure that everything was going accordingly down at the Hogwarts end. He needed to see him face to face, and he would.

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Draco's small body gave a sudden lurch as he felt the pendant burning his neck. He forgot about that. From what he could sense his Master did not want a conversation, he wanted to see Draco in person.

He shuddered at the thought, but realized that he got all the information that he needed and all he really had to do was cover up the fact that he was sleeping the whole time. He felt a familiar tugging at his navel, and he supposed that the Dark Lord forgot to tell him that the pendant was also a portkey, and he was off to meet his Master.

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Snape Manor was not really a Manor, but more of a cottage. Walking from the apparition point to the cottage, James forgot how beautiful it was. The flowers were in full bloom the little garden gate swung back and forth, and the arc was covered in white lilies.

He carried Harry into the house and up the stairs. He moved gently as to not jiggle his sleeping son. He removed the stupefy curse off of him, ready for when Harry awoke. It seemed, however, that Harry just fell asleep on their way there.

He moved them into the bedroom and transfigured Harry's clothing to pyjamas. He took off Harry's shoes and tucked him into bed. He kissed Harry's forehead and then as he exited he placed a ward on Harry's bedroom that would not allow Harry out, unless James

himself had given Harry permission to leave. James knew that it was extreme, but he also knew that Harry falling off his broom was not an accident, he had seen Harry fly millions of times before that and knew he was an excellent flyer. No Harry jumped of his own free will. James took a quick glance around the room to make sure that when Harry did wake up then there would be nothing for him to hurt himself on. He closed the door gently behind him, and went to the gardens.

He needed to set up new wards, as the old ones were not as strong as it used to be. As well, tomorrow he planned to find a new residence. He was thinking perhaps, in a muggle village, where nobody would recognize him or his son. They could start a new life, and put the wizarding world behind them for good. He knew that the ministry would find out that Harry was gone and the faster they left Snape Manor the better. He never quite trusted Dumbledore.

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“How may I be of service to you my Lord?” Draco spoke, as he knelt down, his head bowed before Voldemort.

"I have been having these strange feelings all last night and day Draco, and I need some answers."

"If I can help you, my Lord, you know I will."

"I know Draco. Now tell me has anything happened to Potter that I need to be made aware of?"

This was what Draco was waiting for, his Master was too smart. If he just answered what he knew then he would be safe.

“Yes my Lord. Potter tried to commit suicide last night, but was saved by his father at the last minute. Then today he got out of bed and went to play Quidditch with Granger and the Weasley’s. When he fell off his broom, his father saved him again, but this time they disappeared.” Draco told his story in one long breath. He took a quick glance at his Lord and wished that he were still a child.

Voldemort was angry. His eyes were slits, and he looked ready to murder him. Potter slipped through his fingers again, and the stupid boy did nothing to stop him. "Where were you? Why didn't you contact me at once? That was what the pendant was for."

Draco cringed the Dark Lord was not yelling, it was like he was under sedation. "I figured that I would wait to see what happened. I mean he came out alright. The Quidditch game I did not have time to react, my Lord, because I came here right away, before I was contacted by you." He lied hoping that the snake like man before him would not see through his lie.

"Liar. Tsk tsk tsk..." The Dark Lord shook his head. "I thought better of you little dragon. Oh how disappointed I am in you. You forget dear boy that I am a very skilled legilimens, and the only reason why you know of the news that you brought me is because you overheard a conversation. You were sleeping the whole time. Now let me show you what I do to people like you."

Draco became a trembling mass of flesh, when he felt the cruciatus curse hit his body. The curse was repeated for twenty minutes. When it finally ended he had a vague sense of who he was, but that was all. He could not remember anything else, who his parents were, or even who the man was standing before him.

"I'll inform your father of your tragic demise. I have special plans for you Dragon." Voldemort hissed at the confused boy. He did not expect an answer; he knew Draco was too far-gone. "Nott, McNair, take young Malfoy to the dungeons. See to it that he is heavily guarded."

Two heavy men entered the room, kneeled before their Lord and kissed the hem of his robes.

"Yes my Lord." They both said simultaneously. And they dragged the silver haired youth away.

In his dreams he was still flying. Flying above the sky, above the highest mountain peaks. In his dream he was the only person who existed. There was not a single living soul who could have some kind of claim on him. In his dream he was his own person, free and able to do whatever he wanted.

His dream soon came to a bitter end, when he felt the first ray of the morning sun beat down on him. His oversensitive eyes flinched from the brightness. He refused to wake up; he was having far too much fun flying. He rolled over onto his stomach feeling softness he did not feel before. He burrowed deeper into the mattress burying his head in the fluffy pillow.

Mattress, pillow, this was not right. He was supposed to be with his mother and relatives, and Sirius. He was not supposed to be here. He opened his eyes in frustration. Fear crept into his body, and he became rigid with apprehension. The room was dark and he could not see. He could see Dudley's old toys scattered around the room. He could hear his Uncle's footsteps thudding heavily on the stairs, across the landing and making it to his room. He could see the knob turn and he could see the man enter his high cruel laughter ringing harshly in his ears.

Harry forced his eyes shut. "It's not real, it's not real, it's not real." He kept thinking to himself, over and over again. "You've just seen the sunlight, it's not dark, he's not here, and he can't hurt you." He had to remind himself that he was no longer at his Uncle's house in Privet Drive; he was far away from there. He had been rescued. His mind was playing tricks on him, and if he allowed his mind to keep up these games he would go mental.

Counting to ten, Harry opened his eyes very slowly. The room was brightly lit, and there was no sign of any danger. The layout of the room was immaculate. It was almost the same size as the boy's dormitory in Hogwarts. However that's where the resemblance ended. The colour scheme of the room was green and silver, Slytherin colours, and the bedspread was plain black. The furniture was made from the finest mahogany wood that money could buy.

Harry made his way out of the bed. He figured that he should be safe wherever he was considering that he was on Hogwarts' grounds when he came here, and the school was heavily warded. He went to the door and made to leave when he was tossed backwards and landed in a ruffled heap on his bed.

He "harrumphed" and untangled himself on the bed. He tried again, this time the door expelled him on the floor rather roughly. Harry was getting frustrated he wanted out, and he wanted out now. He looked at the window; he had not tried that yet. It could work, maybe whoever had him had forgot to spell the window and he could get away using that.

He unlatched the lock on the window, and to his surprise it easily unlocked. He grabbed onto the ledge and was about to stick his head out when he felt his body flying in the air once more. This time he hit the wall rather roughly and took it as his cue to just give up. There was no way out.

He started pacing nervously; he hated being locked in a room. This did remind him of the Dursleys and what his Uncle had made him endure. He was not an animal to be locked and caged. He was a human being. Nobody not even his friends saw that. To everyone he was an object to rid them of the most hated wizard of their time.

Harry looked for anything that could have been left lying around. The least the person could have done was to have left him a book to read, or maybe this was some new way to torture him. Make him so bored he drove himself crazy and then they would kill him. Harry was so desperate he would be willing to even do the potions homework Snape set for the summer.

A smirk curled on his lips, one that would have made Malfoy quiver in his shoes. No not Snape, his father had set the work, which meant that he would not have to do it at all. He sat on the only chair in the room that was adjacent from the bed, it took all his might not to get up and start pacing again, to burn off some of the pent up frustration in his small body. He wished he had not screwed up his first attempt, and for the first time in his life he wished his father had not been alive, and that Severus Snape was still Severus Snape.

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“Harry.” James called to his son in barely a whisper. He had no idea what Harry would do, the young man before him was so fragile, life having beat him so long ago.

"Harry." James tried again.

"I can't do that son." He felt bad; he would give anything to be able to let Harry out by himself. If he was with him, then that would be a whole other story altogether.

James walked towards where Harry was sitting, and crouched down at Harry's eye level, so they were staring each other straight in the face. James rested his hand on Harry's knee. Harry on the other hand lifted his knee up so that James hand fell away. "Harry look what I brought, some breakfast, yea."

“Why what? Why did I bring you your breakfast? Because you need to eat.” James looked puzzled. What kind of a question was that that his son was asking him?

“Why did you bring me here, why couldn’t you just leave me alone.” His voice broken, he looked so lost.

James just wanted to take his son and remove all of his pain, but there was no way to do it, well there was, but those would just leave emotional scars and Harry had enough of those to deal with already.

“Why? Because I love you. You’re my son, and I would do anything for you.” Now he just wanted to shake his son, to allow common sense to be knocked into him.

“Why? Nobody else has. I’m used to being by myself. I’m a burden. I was to Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia. I know I am to the Weasley’s, I put their lives in danger every time I see them, Remus is still Remus, and you think I killed Sirius.” His emerald eyes looked so lost and empty, he had nobody to turn to.

“I never, NEVER have thought that you killed Sirius. That was NOT YOUR FAULT, AND YOU ARE NOT A BURDEN.”

“Yes I am.” He folded his arms protectively around his chest, breathing very heavily. “And you told me straight out at Hogwart’s that if it weren’t for me Sirius would still be alive. Maybe it would have been better if I fell through the veil instead.” He hung his head down and stared at the silver carpeting.

“What I said at the infirmary was a slip of my tongue. I never meant it. I was mad, and before I knew what I was saying that came out of my mouth. And let me tell you something I was so ashamed of what I said that I wanted to die again.”

“Honestly I wish you were still Snape. It would make my life a lot easier.” Harry finished dejectedly.

“Harry look I brought you some of your favourite foods. If I thought you were a burden I wouldn’t have made it for you. Plus I already know how you feel about me, and I’m hoping later that things will

change between the two of us.” He lifted up the cover to the tray revealing all sorts of delicious foods; eggs, rashers, treacle tarts, pumpkin juice, and many other foods adorned the silver tray.

“Highly unlikely.” Harry said.

Harry did not take notice at the contents on the tray he, however, took notice of how all the food was already pre – cut into tiny chewable pieces. The plates, pitcher and cup that were holding his food and pumpkin juice were made out of plastic. There was no cutlery or anything sharp to hurt himself on, James made sure of that.

Harry’s face furrowed up in disgust. “I’m very capable of cutting up my own food.”

“Yes that may be so.” James said carefully, “But after the few little stunts that you pulled, I don’t think I can take it anymore if you tried a new way to do yourself in. And while we’re being honest I will tell you truthfully that I don’t trust you with anything sharp, and you can’t say you blame me for it.”

“I’m not a baby!” Harry screamed.

“I never said that you were. But I want to make sure that you’re safe, and not going to try and do yourself in at the first chance you get when I’m not looking. I’m only protecting you.”

“I don’t need protection, especially towards myself.” He grabbed a plate off of the tray, and for a fleeting second James thought that this was the end of the argument, but he was soon mistaken. Harry took the treacle tarts and flung them at the door. Having the protective wards on it, the door flung the food back into the room, aiming them the way they came. Harry and James had to duck for cover, the walls and the carpet being the innocent victims in this war.

“Now that was uncalled for.” James cleaned the mess up with a simple cleaning charm. “If you don’t eat, then you won’t leave this room.” He tried bargaining.

“I changed my mind anyways I love my room here. This little prison that you’ve got me in is surprisingly comfortable. I could get used to



this. I especially enjoy the Slytherin colours, they're just my style." He sneered, Harry had been doing that a lot lately.

"Well, I was going to take you out in the gardens. They're very beautiful, and I was thinking of a picnic. I thought that would be fun and we would be able to talk and get to know one another, put aside our differences and maybe try to become a family, but I see that you're not ready to be let outside just yet, but we could still work on becoming a family."

"What family James. I don't see any here do you." Harry did not look at his father when he said this, he knew he hurt the man terribly, but he was too exhausted from everything, he needed to get everything off of his chest before it was too late. "You keep me here, lock me up, treat me like a baby, and you say that maybe we could become a family. You're worse then the Dursley's. When they locked me up they usually chose to ignore me as well, and I don't have to hardly see them. Uncle Vernon was better than you."

James did not know what to say he was shaking so hard. He was too shocked at the words Harry said. How could he be compared to the Dursley's? He was trying to save Harry's life, not take it away from him. He chose instead to try a different tactic. He knew deep down that Harry was only riling him up to see how far he could be pushed, testing his boundaries, and James refused to let Harry win, he was the adult here, not Harry.

"First off Harry, this is not a prison. The wards are only on here to protect you, so you don't try to hurt yourself again. I don't know what I would do if anything happened to you. When I found you lying down, bloody, an inch away from death, my heart literally stopped, I was so scared, more so than the day Voldemort went to Godric's Hollow. I thought I lost you for a second time. Do you know what that can do to a person? I just found you and thought I nearly lost you, Harry. You are the most important thing in the world to me, and I don't want anything to happen to you again. You are my world, my life."

"If that were true you would have came back for me that day, you would have fought, and never let me go to the Dursley's. You could have tried harder."

James had just felt like he had just been slapped. Harry was right he should have tried harder, but how could he have fought when he was bound and forced to do something he would never have wanted to do in the first place? He was just as much a victim as Harry was, and yet he was paying for the mistakes of others.

“Now get out! If you’re not going to let me out of this room then please just leave me alone.” Harry lost all his steam and he slumped further into his chair, looking so dejected.

“I’ll go Harry only for a few minutes, there is something that I need to show you. Please try to eat something.”

“I’ll try.” He mumbled as James made his way out the warded bedroom, he felt guilty for what he just said to his father. He knew that his father only had his best interest at heart, but Harry felt so confused. If he did care for him, why didn’t he come to him sooner? There were so many times when Harry needed a father or mother, but nobody ever came for him. Why now? He looked at the tray and all the tiny pieces of food that were cut up for him. He took a hand and swiped the tray, all the contents splattering the silver carpeting, creating a rainbow of colours. With nothing else to do Harry just sat looking out the window. “The least he could have left me a book to read. Or perhaps he thought I would do myself in with a paper cut.” He thought to himself.

James went to his room, and what felt like the hundredth time he pulled a silvery strand from his hair and placed it in a plastic bowl. He could not be too cautious when it came to dealing with Harry. He hoped beyond hopes that this would work.

He carried the bowl back to Harry’s room, where he was not too surprised to see Harry the way he left him, or the pile of spilt food all over the floor.

“Were you able to eat any of it?” James asked.

“No.” Came the blunt reply.

“Harry I came to show you something. I think it would help you in understanding what happened to me, and why I was Severus and was never able to show myself.”

“I don’t care what you have to show me. It’s all in the past.”

“No Harry I’m not letting you off that easily this time. You will see what I have to show you. You have brushed me aside since you found out I was alive, and I have put up with it pretty well lately. Now, my patience is running very low. You can fight or go willingly, it’s your choice.”

Harry contemplated his situation. When did he ever do anything he did not want to do willingly? Never. This time would be no different. He got up from the chair, and James at that point thought that Harry had consented, but when he walked past him, Harry headed for the doors.

“It won’t work Harry, no matter how much you try to get out of here.”

“Oh yeah watch me.” He snarled.

James watched. He watched Harry fly through the air and land on the bed. He laughed in amusement. Harry scowled at him. His father was not supposed to be laughing, he was hurting more than anything and his father was just standing there laughing at him.

“It’s not funny.” Harry cried from where he just recently landed.

James took notice of Harry and saw that his son was not amused by this. “Sorry.” James said, his laughter dying instantaneously. “Please Harry.” James held out his hand for Harry to take.

Harry turned his back to the extended hand, never in his life would he ever take that hand.

James got up and tried to take hold of Harry’s hand. Harry quickly darted away, and James went after him. What started as a way to be nice turned into a game of tag, as James tried to catch Harry, and Harry kept running around the room away from the man.

Resignedly, James took out his wand and said “Accio, Harry.”

Harry found himself in James' arms. He tried to wiggle free, but James was so much bigger than him and stronger. James knew he had won. Harry slumped into the mans arms defeated. He remembered James doing that to his mother, the night before his world came crumbling down, and he sank deeper in the arms.

James placed a kiss on the unruly mop of hair. "It's alright Harry. I promise it's ok. Give me ten minutes to see my side of things."

James held Harry one handed and with his now free hand he dipped his finger into the silver substance, where it swept him and Harry into it's deep cool contents.

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Meanwhile in the underground building that was the Ministry of Magic, Albus Dumbledore went to meet with Cornelius Fudge in his office. Albus still felt that he would get to the Potters in time before the Ministry, but just as a precautionary he needed everybody and that included muggles on the alert of any spotting.

Albus entered the bright room, it was warm and welcoming, a very different one to that of the man in the room. Cornelius Fudge looked livid. His face was pink and his bowler hat fell to the floor when he saw Albus.

“What are you doing here, Dumbledore?” Cornelius asked. He was far too lenient with the elder wizard, and if he still could have his way the man would be sent to a cell in Azkaban. “We had a deal, I gave you a pardon and as much leniency as you needed, and you never set foot into this office, no matter what the situation is.”

“I need your help Cornelius. I have some very grave news, and what I am about to tell you needs to be dealt with immediately.” Albus sat down in the seat by Fudge’s desk.

“You want my help?” Fudge was ready to bounce up on his seat; he had been waiting for this day many a year already. “What may I ask will I get in return for helping you Dumbledore?”

“How did I know Cornelius that you would be wanting something in return?” Dumbledore’s eyes sparkled with its usual flair.

“Well nothing in this world is for free Dumbledore, even you know that. So shall we strike up a bargain?”

“Alright Cornelius, if that’s the way you want to go. How about your life and all the rest of the wizarding world for that of helping to recapture that of the “Saviour.” Albus knew he struck a cord when he mentioned the fact that Harry was missing.

“Potter gone.” Fudge spluttered dumbly. “Potter can’t be gone. Potter’s at his relatives in Surrey.”

“No he’s not I’m afraid. And you must let me tell you everything without any further interruptions, is that clear. Everybody’s fate including my own rests upon getting Harry back to Hogwarts and in my care safely.”

“Alright Dumbledore proceed.” Fudge exclaimed warily. He just wanted the bloody war to end, and with the boy – who – lived gone their chances of a short war were slim to none.

Dumbledore went on with the story starting with the day that Godric’s Hollow got attacked, ending with James taking Harry off of Hogwarts grounds and disappearing with the boy, not to long ago.

Throughout the story Fudge’s face kept changing colour. It must have gone through every shade of red and blue there was. At the end he was quite relieved to know that Harry was still alive just missing. Finding the boy would be easy, but taking him away from his father would be hard.

“So what do you suggest we do Dumbledore.”

“First off in order for us to get Harry fully back in our control we need to get him away from his father.”

“I know that Dumbledore, I’m not an idiot. How do we get Potter away from his father? That’s what I’m asking.”

“James Potter is not all there, Cornelius if you get my drift. After everything that’s happened to him he sort of snapped. Not fit to look after the boy – who – lived. Can be considered dangerous.”

Fudge’s eyes sparkled with glee. He knew what he had to do. Once word got around that a criminally insane man has gotten the “golden boy” every witch and wizard would be out there looking to bring back the only person who could save them from mortal peril.

Albus watched as Fudge fire called two Aurors into his office. Crubbins and Benson entered the office immediately. Shacklebolt would have been there, but he was still at Hogwarts watching over the other children that were left.

“I have an assignment for you two. I need posters hung over all the windows and shops in both Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley. Harry Potter is missing. I need one that shows pictures of both Harry and his father James. The poster should say that James is considered dangerous and mentally unbalanced. It should also report that he has kidnapped Harry and has left us no clue as to where to find him. State that there will be a ten thousand-galleon reward for the person who captures the eldest Potter and has found the wizarding world’s hero. The wizard wireless needs to put out a bulletin in between each and every song that is played, with the same information as the posters. Got that?” he questioned the Auror named Benson.

The two Aurors stared at the Minister for Magic as if he had grown an extra head. “Are you saying that Harry Potter, The Harry Potter, is missing?” Benson answered in reply to Fudge’s question.

“Yes. Now do you understand the orders? If not there are other less qualified ones who would gladly be wanting your positions.”

“Yes we got it.” Crubbins answered.

“So then what are you waiting for? Go already.”

They disappeared without any hesitations.



Harry reluctantly opened them. He did not want to have magic forcing him into doing anything anymore. He looked straight ahead to where James had told him to look before.

There was nothing and nobody, Harry wondered when the pensieve would start this was actually more boring than being locked up in his room.

Just as that thought ended a heated argument between three people broke out. The man in the chair was being ignored by the others and the other two occupants were discussing his future as if he were not there. Harry gasped when he recognized his Father, Snape, and Dumbledore. Snape and Dumbledore were talking about his father's future and from what he could tell his father was not one bit happy about this. Harry inwardly laughed, he knew how his father felt, every decision in his life was made by other people and not by him. He was always ignored and nobody ever thought to hear what he had to say about his own life.

He saw the two men stupefy James. He saw James waking up and finding himself bound magically by ropes. The fingers around Harry's arms tightened its grip as the real James looked on once more to find himself in a situation that cost him his whole life.

Harry then saw Dumbledore giving his father an ultimatum and then making him change into somebody he did not want to be. He then saw Severus apologizing to his father, for forcing him to do this. He could see the real Snape was not as mean as his father's one was. His eyes were soft and mild, and it looked like he would never harm an innocent person.

What he saw next made him want to scream out for his father. James was screaming in pain as he did not remember anything he was so lost and confused. Harry felt bad for this man. He looked into his eyes and noticed sadness, as the pensieve James cried.

He then looked at his real father, the one that he snubbed so harshly. The one who had been telling him since the beginning that he had no choice, the one that Harry wished was never alive. That one was crying too. Harry studied his father, he was so ashamed of the way



he acted. He could never have figured that his father was telling the truth, and he hurt the man on purpose.

“Let’s go son. There’s nothing more to see here.” James words were rough from the emotions that he was feeling.

Before James could take him out of the pensieve Harry swirled around and buried his head into his father's chest.

“Dad, I’m so sorry. I never knew. I didn’t mean it. I’m so sorry. Please forgive me.” He cried.

James held onto his son wrapping him in the biggest embrace he could muster. Tears running down his own face, he gently stroked Harry's back soothingly. They sat in a huddled form on the floor, father and son reunited at last.

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Back in the muggle world Petunia and her son Dudley were coming back from their trip to Aunt Marge's. Their return was a bit earlier then they had planned, but Petunia could not take anymore of Marge's dogs jumping on her and helping themselves to her dinner. Dudley on the other hand could not stand being away from his computer, television, and friends for so long. So after two weeks of being gone Petunia packed their bags and drove them home.

It was a welcomed sight to be back at Privet Drive. Everything looked the same and was nice and symmetrical. She sighed happily as she and Dudley started unloading the car full of luggage. She just hoped that Vernon fared better with the “freak” than they did at his sisters.

Once inside the house Dudley went straight for the cupboard and pulled out a large bag of chips, a box of cookies, and a one-litre bottle of Coke. He sat his whale-sized body on two chairs and turned on the tele. He turned it to his favourite show, and laughed hysterically along with the jokes. Missing the note that was right under his nose.

Petunia Dursley on the other hand put all the luggages in Harry's room. She figured he did not need the space; his bed was plenty, and went lazily down to join her beautiful son.

"My little Dudders are you sure you want to be eating so much? Why not take a break, Pookie." She asked her son.

Dudley glared at her from his seat. "Look what you did mum, I missed the ending to my favourite show, now I'm going to have to wait three more weeks for the repeat." He whined.

"I'm sorry babykins, what can mummy get you to make it better?" She hugged him.

Dudley smirked. This was easier than he thought it would be. "I want to have my second bedroom back." He pouted, he always had hated Harry for taking it over, and had wanted it back for about five years now.

"Anything Popkins, the nasty boy can go back into the cupboard. We'll let him know when he gets back with your father." She kissed Dudley on the cheeks.

He wiped her kisses away, when she was not looking, being a Dursley had some major advantage in getting his own way.

Petunia turned away from her son, happy knowing that he himself was pleased. That's when she noticed an envelope lying on the table near the bottle of coke. She took the envelope and carefully tore the flap away from the glue. She scanned the letter and almost fainted from shock. The freak had done it. He had destroyed their family because of him her husband did not have his soul, and could not regain it unless he made a full recovery. She wished that wherever the 'freak' was he was suffering just as badly as her Vernon was.

"Mummy look. They're showing a news clip about Harry." Dudley said pointing at the television.

Petunia Dursley pulled herself away from the letter that was addressed by Albus Dumbledore. She took a glance at the television. There was an Amber Alert set out for Harry and an arrest warrant set

out for his father. Petunia was shaking so badly from anger, seeing the picture of the smiling 'freak' was enough for her to grab the saltshaker off of the table and throw it at the television. The television screen shattered into hundreds of tiny pieces.

Dudley stared mortified at the broken television. His first love was broken. “M-m-m-u-m.” He spluttered. “That was my favourite television.” He cried.

“There are more important things than television, Dudley.” She whispered.

“Like what?” He challenged his mother.

“Like how you don’t have a father anymore.” She shrieked running out of the room and slamming the door to her bedroom closed.

Dudley just shrugged his shoulders and went to the living room to watch television. He could care less about where his father was as long as he had his good old tele.

Petunia sat on her bed. She had to be the one to find the 'freak' and his now undead father first, and when she did she would be the one to finish him off at last.

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Lucius was sitting at his table enjoying his brunch. He had not been able to get any real rest since he was set free from Azkaban on a slight technicality. This was his first real day off, and he was intending to enjoy it as much as he could. However, that did not last that long when a scared looking house – elf entered the dining room.

“Master Malfoy has a visitor Sir.” The poor little house – elf squeaked.

“Show him in you fool.” He threw an apple at the house – elf’s head.

The poor house – elf ran for cover. She scurried away, far from her evil master as she could get.

"Now, now, Lucius is that anyway to treat a slave?" Voldemort laughed.

"You're one to talk, my Lord." Lucius joined in the banter, knowing full well he could not get in any trouble with the Dark Lord.

"Something to eat my Lord?" Lucius waved his hand over the magnificent spread of half breakfast food, and half lunch food.

"No thank you Lucius, I came on more pressing matters." Voldemort's eyes turned an even darker shade of crimson.

Lucius watched as the man's emotions showed through on his face, and he understood that this had something to do with Draco. Otherwise the Dark Lord would not be bothered at this time during the day to come and visit him.

"What has that delinquent son of mine done now?" Lucius was exasperated, it seemed that Draco just lost his only chance to join the inner circle.

"You are asking the wrong question Lucius, you should be asking what hasn't he done?" Voldemort hissed in anger.

Lucius knew this was not good. Draco must have done something way beyond his normal idiocy.

"What has that wretched son of mine not done now, my Lord." He asked warily.

"I'll tell you what he has not done now, your son, Draco, apparently had fallen asleep while on duty, two nights ago, and now he's lost both the Potter men. Nobody has been able to find them, Lucius. It's like they fell from the face of the planet. Do you know how long it has taken me to come up with a plan? Do you know what Draco has cost me? I am not happy Lucius. That boy of yours has ruined everything in which I have worked so hard for, I finally had Potter where I wanted him, where I could destroy him, and make the Wizarding World mine, but your son just buggered up my whole plan."

“My Lord, I am so sorry for what he has done, but please have mercy on him. He was probably really tired, I’m positive he won’t do it ever again.”

“Save it Lucius. I have already set a punishment for your young heir. And since you were the one that suggested he become the spy, you will be the one to administer his sentence.”

Lucius paled. He could honestly say that he never really cared about Draco. Draco was just a vessel to carry on the Malfoy name, but just because he despised his mini carbon copy, he did not want to be the one to administer his son pain.

“As you wish, my Lord.” He was too smart to go against the Dark Lord. It was between his pain and his son’s, and he figured it might as well be his son’s.

“I expect you to meet me after you have finished your brunch. I will tell you everything that needs to be done for Draco’s punishment.” And without another word the Dark Lord left.

After the Dark Lord left, Lucius decided that it deserved Draco right. He had disgraced his family, and anyways even if he were to survive he would be thrown from the Malfoy house forever. It was not a loss; him and Narcissa could make a new heir, a better, stronger, and more handsome one, and the new one would live up to the Malfoy name in every way that Draco couldn't.

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"Dad?" Harry asked quietly.

“Hmm.” James replied his head resting against the baseboard of Harry’s bed, and Harry relaxing against his father.

“Nothing.” Harry answered. He had no idea why he just called out for his dad. They had been sitting in pleasant silence for the last few minutes, and he had to disturb it by speaking, but he needed the reassurance of having his father close to him.

When Harry and James re-emerged from the pensieve, they spent a good few hours talking. At first it was just on the simple things, like Quidditch, school, and friends, but as their conversation progressed so did the subjects.

“Harry tell me why you did what you did?” James asked. He wanted to get to the root of the problem, and help his son. Talking was the best solution for a person that had or was contemplating suicide.

“I – I wanted it to all end. I couldn’t take the pain anymore. It seems like all my life has been one big mistake after another, and I thought with me gone, everything would end, and everybody that I cared about would be safe from Voldemort. Do you know what it’s like when you have to see everybody and everything that you have ever cared for die or get broken?” James could only nod; he had felt like that, but then he was able to get it all back, unlike Harry who would never get the people or things that he lost back. “I felt like something was tearing me apart. I felt as if I would burst. I saw Sirius fall through the veil and couldn’t do anything to help him. I saw Hedwig get her neck snapped by Uncle Vernon, and I couldn’t do anything to help her, and then there was you, I saw you come back to life, and I thought that if it weren’t for you my life could have been better. I couldn’t face you, Dad. You were just a reminder of everything that I have destroyed. And if it weren’t for me mom would still be alive. I wanted to find peace, and that was the only way that I could think of doing.” Harry turned around from his father. He did not want James to see him like this. Talking about it helped a little, but it still did not help ease his pain.

“Oh, Harry. If I could I would take away the pain from you, and bring back Sirius, Hedwig and your mother, but unfortunately I can’t. But I can promise you that with time you will feel better and I am always here to help you.”

When Harry did not respond James took that as a hint that their conversation was over. He knew that Harry was feeling humiliated by what he just said. He knew his son would never have told him this, but he also knew that Harry was feeling very vulnerable with everything that happened today. And James knew that Harry would have told this to a total stranger if he were given the chance to talk. It

was a small breakthrough in their relationship and James did not want to push it any further, in case it made Harry pull back. Baby steps were fine for now. James decided it would be best if he left Harry be, so he made to get off the bed, wanting Harry to sleep for a while. He could tell that the conversation that they just had had left Harry a little weak and needed as much rest as he could get.

As James was making his way to the exit, his son made a small noise and asked him to stay with him. That was the moment that James was looking for. Harry was finally accepting him as his father.

His mind coming back to the present he could hear Harry's muffled snores. How quickly that boy falls asleep. James smiled, remembering the small baby in the playpen who bit his finger with his sharp teeth. He checked to make sure Harry was really asleep; his son had a habit of playing games with him.

James watched as Harry slept. He was so lost in thought that he did not hear his best friend enter the room.

"Well this is a surprise Prongs. The way things were going I would never have expected Lil' Prongs to even let you step into his room." He laughed. "Just thought that in the end one of you would wind up killing each other."

"Moony, moony, moony." James shook his head. "You should know better than that. I always get my way."

They both laughed. It must have been loud enough because Harry awoke.

"I knew it. You little liar, you were not sleeping." James looked down at his son.

Harry looked at James confused. He was sleeping; the events of the past couple of days took a lot out of him.

"Hi ya, Harry." Remus called cheerily to him. When he was told the news that Harry tried to take his life, Remus almost took his.

Harry shrunk back away from Remus. He had not seen Remus since he threatened his Uncle at Kings Cross, and the first couple of weeks Harry was the only one who sent the letters, Remus never replied. He knew that Remus was going to blame him for Sirius' death; He did, his father did, and now he braced himself for what Remus was going to say.

"Harry are you alright?" James asked when he did not acknowledge Remus' hello.

"How did you get in? I thought you warded this place, or is it warded just against me." Harry spat out ignoring James' question.

"No Harry, this place is safe. Nobody can spot us unless I give him or her permission. The only person I allowed permission to was Remus. He's my best friend and he's going to let me know first hand what's going on outside the house. Last night I set up another Fidelius charm. Nobody can find us."

"Is Remus the secret keeper?" Harry asked them, anger starting to rise.

"No." James replied and they both shook their heads.

"Then how come he knows? What about my friends? And who's the secret keeper." Questions kept coming out of Harry full force. He did not think it was fair that James could have his friends and Harry had to stay secluded in this room.

"Harry first off I already told you why he knows, nobody other than Remus knows where we are. Secondly I don't think it wise if your friends know. They are the best friends you could have, but right now I think it best if they don't come round right at the moment, and thirdly, I'm not going to tell you who the secret keeper is."

"Well then it's Remus." Harry stated simply.

"I said nobody from the order knows I did not say if anybody else knows." James quipped back. Last night, when Harry was asleep James set up another Fidelius charm. He whispered the secret in Harry's ear. That way consciously Harry had no clue, but



subconsciously he was holding the secret that would save both their lives.

"Fine be that way." Harry grumbled, and he rolled away from his father, back facing him, and he fell back asleep.

"And here I thought we were progressing." James said to his friend, body slumping in defeat.

"Give it time Prongs. You guys still have a long ways to go." Remus tried to soothe his friends hurt feelings.

"How's he doing? You don't know how much that scared me. I thought we lost him James."

"So did I. He's actually doing better than I thought a month or so, and Harry will be back to his normal self. At least I hope." James sighed.

"He hates me too."

"What are you on about, Harry doesn't hate you. The boy doesn't know hate. Well unless it's against me, Dumbledore, or himself. He's too innocent." James saw his friends expression change, and he finally understood where Remus was coming from. "He doesn't think that you killed Sirius, Remus, he thinks that you blame him for killing Sirius." James could have laughed if the situation was not so serious.

"What? How could he think that I would blame him? It was not his fault." Remus cried surprised. Stressing the words in the last sentence.

"Yea, try telling him that." James said. "So mind telling me what's really going on? You know you're not supposed to be here, unless it's an emergency. Don't get me wrong Remus I love you like a brother, but we need to be careful now."

"I know and I would never have come otherwise. I think we should take this downstairs. Let Harry rest."

James pushed himself carefully out of the bed so as to not jiggle the bed. He wanted Harry to really sleep.

He followed Remus down to the dark kitchen, and they both took seats upon rickety old chairs.

Silently without saying a word Remus took the wizarding wireless and flicked it to the all witches and wizards news station. James did not say anything, he knew something was up and waited for the announcement.

"Attention Witches and Wizards everywhere. An important News bulletin has come up. Our hero Harry Potter has been kidnapped. I repeat kidnapped. As of right now there are no real leads to where the boy could be. We do, however, have one thing and that is the name of the kidnapper, who is none other than James Potter. Declared mentally unbalanced, and a risk to himself and Harry, we need your help in finding these two right away. If anyone has any information you can owl us here or at the ministry of magic. A ten thousand galleon reward is offered to anyone who brings the 'boy – who – lived' back to us. This report will be played after every song until the capture of James Potter. Remember do not approach James Potter if found."

That ended the announcement. James looked at Remus stunned. Neither one said anything to each other.

"Are they serious." James asked stunned. What more did they want from him. "Do you know who started this loveable rumour?"

"My guess is as good as yours, but there is one person I can think of." Remus surveyed his broken friend.

"Dumbledore." James snapped. "It has to be him. I know it. At first he was ok with me being back to myself, but lately he's just been acting really strange. He's been wanting to separate me and Harry for the past couple of days."

"I think you're just in shock. Albus would not do that to you or Harry. He cares deeply for the both of you."

"But he's more concerned about winning the war. And with him that means stopping anybody who stands in his way. Right now I'm

standing in Harry's, and everyone knows that **my son** is suppose to defeat Voldemort."

“That’s not the person that I was thinking of, but, all right mate, why don’t I just make us some tea? I think that would help calm our nerves.”

"I don't want tea, Remus. I want things back to the way they used to be."

“I know mate, I know.” Remus wrapped his arms around his friend. He had no idea what to say. Him and James were in the same position. All he could offer was a friendly ear and a shoulder to lean upon.

**“DAD!”** A loud voice rang from up the stairs and down the hall.

James jumped up at his son's screaming. He knew he should not feel this way, but he was happy. Harry was finally yelling for him. James ran up the stairs and into Harry's bedroom, where he saw his way too small and skinny son sitting half – up his body soaked in sweat, and his skin all pale. Compared to the blackness of the bedspread Harry could pass as a ghost.

James ran to Harry's side, cradling Harry in his arms.

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It was cold and damp in the dungeons. His body ached all over. It felt like little shards of glass were tearing his ligaments apart. Draco Malfoy had never felt this bad in all his life. His mind was not exactly there either. All the cruciatus' on his body had left him ill – minded, true afterwards he did remember a few things about his life, including Potter and the Dark Lord, but most of his memories were still a hazy fog. When he was allowed to go free, he would find Potter and kill him himself. It was all Potter's fault, Potter was the one to get him into this mess. Draco would fix him good.

Draco knew his punishment was far from over. The Dark Lord was very angry with him. For all he knew he would be kept down in the

dungeons for the rest of his life. Draco wondered what the Dark Lord would choose as his punishments. He could imagine all sorts of torture devices that went along with his punishment; he had failed everyone, including himself. There was no way that the Dark Lord would ever let him join the inner circle. His father was sure to disown him when he got wind of what he had done. The only person he could rely upon was his mother. His mother would not desert him in his time of need.

Draco heard the cell door opening with a loud creak. Two figures dressed in black approached the locked iron gates to his prison. He could not recognize them, but he could take a lucky guess at who one of them was.

He dropped to his knees, ignoring the horrible pain that he felt. "My Lord." He mumbled.

Voldemort grabbed him roughly by the scruff of his neck, and sized the boy up and down. He smirked the most vilest smirk that he could. The boy in his arms shrank back as far as he could.

Draco was petrified now. He knew his punishment would be far worse than he could imagine. He just hoped that whatever it was it was over with fast, Draco could have laughed if he were not in such a serious situation, knowing the Dark Lord, he would never allow his punishments to be over with quickly, he liked to see his victims shake with agony.

A steady light streamed through his cell door. Now Draco could make out the features of the other man, and he began to relax a little bit. His father would not let that much harm come to his son, after all he knew his father would already disown him and that was enough.

Voldemort released the boy from his grip, and Draco ran to his father. Lucius Malfoy pushed his son away just as Draco was about to launch himself at him.

Draco fell to the floor and looked at his father stunned. "Father, I didn't mean for it to happen. It was an accident. I tried my best truly I did. It was Potter's fault, I swear."

“Look at you Draco. You’re acting worse than mudbloods usually do. You are nothing more than a waste of sperm, Draco. I regret the day your mother gave birth to you.” Lucius sneered at his now non – existent son.

Draco looked at his father in shock. There was nothing more to be said. He just wished his father would see the real Draco. He was scared and more than anything he needed the comfort of his father, but knew that he would not get it. He felt tears spring to his eyes, but he would not cry in front of the man who had just insulted him. Malfoy’s never cried.

Lucius turned away from his son with a look of repulsion. He was a pathetic little thing. His new child would not cry like a little sissy. His new son would take his punishments as a man. Why he kept Draco for so long was beyond his reasoning.

Voldemort looked on the show with amusement. This was going better than he thought it would. He could not wait for the grand finale.

When Lucius faced Draco again, he was holding a very large inanimate object, almost the size of a Grim. Draco could not make out what it was, and he knew this was going to be his punishment. He would stand up and take it like a man.

Draco got up off the floor, but Lucius pushed him down one handed. “I like you better on the floor Draco.” Lucius drawled his voice masking how he truly felt. He poked the object in the side, and at once it became alive.

Draco trembled with fear. His heart pounding, perspiration dripping steadily from his forehead he closed his eyes wanting to get it over with.

“Nagini, dinner time.” Lucius set the snake down.

Draco took one look at the gigantic snake and ran to the other side of the cell. Though there was not that much space left. Cramped into a tight corner there was nowhere left to run, and even if he wanted to he could not run, he was immobilized with fright. All Draco could do was stand still and watch as the snake descended upon him.

Nagini swallowed Draco Malfoy whole.

Lucius looked at the spot where his son used to be. A flitter of guilt passed through him only for a second as Voldemort came up from behind him.

“Excellent show Lucius. We must do it again sometime.” Voldemort crackled with glee.

“Yes, my Lord, it was.” His silver eyes turned to stare at the man before him.

“Let’s go Lucius there is nothing more down here.” Voldemort led the way back to the main building where his most loyal servants could flock to him.

Lucius was about to leave when from behind Voldemort said, “Find Potter Lucius or if you don’t you will meet the same fate as your son. And I can make it a lot worse than your young one met.” He hissed.

“I will, my Lord, you can count on me.” Lucius’ voice wavered, but quickly returned to its normal state.

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Back at Malfoy manner Lucius paced his chambers. He did not think it would be so hard to do what he did to Draco, but seeing his son pleading and scared, was too much for him. He did not think he was capable of so many emotions, one minute he truly hated his son, and the next he was sorry for what he did. He sighed, he could not dwell on the past, Draco was a lost cause, and there was nothing he could do to change it, now he had to focus on finding Potter. How was he supposed to find the bloody – boy – who – lived?

Lucius' pacing became more frantic as he tried to think of ways to get Potter. Then it hit him. Out of nowhere the perfect idea he had ever came up with and he wondered how he could have been so stupid. A smile grew on his face, he wondered how he could not come up with it before, he had a plan and he knew just the right person that would lead him to the Potters, or that would lead the Potters to him. And

when he got his hands on Potter Junior he would torture him slowly and painfully, in the most horrible way that he could think of, then he would let the Dark Lord finish him off.

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Harry had awoken when James went off the bed, but he would never tell his father that. He knew that Remus was there for a reason and he wanted to know why. When he knew his father and Remus were in the kitchens talking, he took the chance and got out of bed. Silently he went to the stairwell and listened in on their conversation.

The first part was pretty boring, and then to his surprise he found the announcer on the wizarding wireless talking and relaying a very important message. Harry listened intently considering it had to do with him; he was mortified by what he heard. They wanted to take him away from his father. He could not let that happen, but if they did find him he would not have a choice, he was still considered a minor. Harry went back to bed thinking and worrying himself. He thought that if they found him they would send him back to the Dursley's, where anything could happen to him. Most likely he would end up dead, and yesterday he would have been all for that, but not today, things had changed. He did not want his father to be taken from him again. And he had no idea what he could do to prevent that from happening. Sure the Fidelius charm was already placed, but if they even ventured out somebody would see them and then owl Dumbledore or Fudge. He was not safe anywhere.

Harry pulled the covers up to his chest, his skin paling and sweat running down his face in buckets. He was scared, and the only person who he knew would take care of him seemed a thousand miles away right now, and that is when he screamed.

Then instantly he found himself in his father's arms. He felt so safe and protected he did not want to be let go of. For once not everything rested on his small shoulders.

James pulled Harry's face away from his chest, so he could look him in the eyes. "Harry what's wrong? Why did you scream like that? Did

you have a nightmare?" James was so worried, his son was in trouble and he did not know how to take away his pain.

Harry shook his head and pulled his face into his dad's cloak burying himself deep inside the smooth silky cloth.

James could not let that happen. Harry just made a breakthrough today and he would not let him become withdrawn again.

"Harry tell me why you screamed like that, and why you look like you've just flown in a marathon."

Harry pulled his face from its cocoon. His eyes were blood shot and he was trembling. "They're going to take you away from me Dad. I can't lose you again, I just can't. Please Dad, please don't let them find us." He cried and nuzzled himself once more into James.

"Harry nobody's going to take you away from me. I won't let that happen. Do you understand? You're mine. I already told you this place is warded and nobody will be able to find us, we're better protected than last time." James held his son tighter. Rubbing soothing circles along his back.

"Promise me." Harry's muffled and sad voice ripped James' heart in two.

"I promise Harry. Never again will I leave you, nor will I allow anybody to separate us." He said. "Never again."



“Dad, C’mon what are you waiting for just throw it already.” The voice of an impatient teenager rang throughout Snape Manor’s gardens.

“I’ll throw it Mr. Potter, when I’m good and ready to throw it.” James chided his son, and with that he threw the freezing Frisbee (Which freezes the person if they drop it) at an unexpecting Harry.

Even though surprised Harry was able to catch it thanks to his seeker flexibility. “Nice try.” He cried triumphantly, his face and body all covered with dirt while playing the game. He pushed his fringe out of his eyes, and threw the Frisbee back to James.

“Don’t you worry Harry, this time I’ll get you. Prongs never misses twice.” He threw the freezing Frisbee back at his son.

Harry caught it and rolled on the lavishing green grass with laughter. His father could be quite amusing at times.

It had been two days since he was brought here and things were going much better than he expected them to. Him and James were getting along better; his father even insisted that they both just eat finger foods and not just Harry. James had made life for Harry as comfortable as possible. He never tried to push Harry to talk, but listened with a kind ear when Harry decided to open up. Little by little Harry was making a rapid recovery. Being out here with his dad, being able to act his own age was making Harry forget what happened to him at the Dursley’s. Here he was no longer ‘the freak’ nor was he ‘the boy who lived’ he was just Harry. And Harry was more than grateful for that.

“Oh yeah, we’ll see about that.” James pounced on his son and began tickling him until Harry could not breathe.

“I. Give. Up.” Harry panted through each breath. Sure it may have been childish to be tickled at his age, but he would not trade this moment for anything. He only wished that his father was there with him while he was growing up.

“See I do win.” James stopped tickling Harry as soon as the teary – eyed boy claimed defeat.

They both just lay there on the billowing grass, trying to catch their breaths, while watching the clouds roll by.

"It's perfect." Harry exclaimed so quietly that James had to lean in to hear what Harry had just said.

"What is?" James asked already knowing what Harry's answer would be.

"This." Was the only word that came out.

"I know. It's like looking at a little piece of heaven." James smiled.

Harry rolled onto his side to look at James in the face. With a pleading look in his eyes he asked. "Dad can I go flying afterwards? Please." Harry begged, he still had to abide by the boundaries, and at times he was still being babied, but now he could see where his father was coming from. He was just being protected, and it felt nice, he had to admit to himself. As a child he was always deprived of everything, and now he lavished the attention he so longingly missed.

"We can go for a ride after lunch if you want. I'll ride beside you, and Harry no trying to run away. You must promise not to get too far from me." James could not take the memory of having Harry falling purposefully off of his broom, and he did not want another encounter like that happening today.

"I promise. And then maybe we can play a game of Quidditch. You can transfigure a rock to turn into a snitch, or something. Potter against Potter. Then we can see who really is the best." Harry laughed.

James joined in. It was nice to hear his son laughing and acting so excited over a simple thing like Quidditch. "Whatever you want to do Harry we'll do. Today is your day, and you can decide on anything you want to do."

Harry beamed. He was never allowed to choose what he wanted to do; it was usually done for him. He had to admit his dad was the best.

“Food.” Harry cried all of a sudden, as a picnic blanket and a picnic basket filled with delicious food appeared before them both. Displaying itself magically as if it were a banquet made for two hundred people and not just two.

“I’m starving.” And in response James’ stomach gave an almighty growl.

This time they were both on the floor laughing again. When they were finally able to control their laughing Harry settled himself by the blankets and started putting on heaping amounts of food on his plate.

James followed suit very quickly as he thought his son would eat it all up at once, and never leave a bit for him. He knew how growing boys were; after all he used to be one himself.

“Dad?” Harry called his father, as he finished taking a bite from his cucumber and tomato sandwich.

“Hmmm.” James replied as he himself picked up another chicken leg. How he loved chicken.

“I was wondering what made mum change her mind about you? All Sirius ever said was that you grew up and you changed. But how exactly did you change. I mean mum really really really hated you.”

“Gee thanks for that lovely commentary on your mother’s feelings.” James joked and then he considered Harry for a moment and he slowly placed down his chicken leg on the Styrofoam plate. “If you must know, you’re mother did not hate me, she just never approved of some of the things I did. Then as the years at Hogwarts went by things started changing very slowly. I stopped being such an outright prat. I realized that if I ever wanted to gain Lily’s affections I would have to start behaving properly and become serious in my studies. The middle of sixth year I buckled down, and my grades went up. Sure I partook in the occasional prank, how could I not? But I never let my emotions control me. I gave up on tormenting the kids younger than me, and that’s when Lily started paying me more attention. During the summer our families went to a cottage like we did every summer, and me and your mother started hitting it off. We discussed what we wanted to do when we were out of Hogwarts. I said I wanted

to become an Auror, and your mother wanted to become a Professor at either Hogwarts or Beauxbatons, she refused Durmstrang. That's how our summer passed. With the best conversation and panoramic view that you could imagine. At the end of the summer we officially became a couple. The last year went by fast, and before we knew it we were married. Two years later I became an Auror, and another year later your mother had you. She did not have time to be a professor, but honestly she could care less, she was so happy Harry. When you were born it was like she became a totally new person, more beautiful, more loving, and definitely more caring. Even though she was already all of that before you, you seemed to bring forth more from her. You were her world Harry. Everything in her world revolved around you. I remember coming home one night from work, looking for supper, which by the way she usually had made already, when I asked her where it was, she said she didn't have time to prepare it, she had been watching you sleep for three hours. She could not take her eyes off of you. She loved you so much." James smiled. " Then there was the time when you're mother was sleeping and I decided to take you out for a walk, you were only two months old. When I came home with you there were about three Aurors taking down a description of what you looked like. She thought I kidnapped you. When the Aurors had left, I got the biggest reprimand I ever had in my life." James chuckled.

"Wow, mum let you have it didn't she?" Harry laughed. "I miss her." He said as an afterthought.

"I know son, but just remember that she always loved you. She sacrificed herself to save you, and she would do it again if she could."

"I know." Was the only reply that came from Harry as he grabbed another sandwich from the basket. Not really hungry he just nibbled on the food, he needed something to do, and the silence was getting awkward.

"Dad can I ask you another question?" Harry looked fearfully, wondering if he would get in trouble.

“Anything. You can ask me anything, whether or not I answer is a whole other topic.” He knew he would tell Harry anything though, there was nothing that he wanted kept secret.

“If your parents and mum’s parents were both wizards and they got along fine what happened to Aunt Petunia? How did she turn out the way that she did?”

“You’re Aunt was always jealous of her sister. There was never a time when Petunia Evans would try and hurt Lily, or try to get her into trouble, but every time she failed miserably. Her jealousy turned into hatred and from then on they never really spoke a word to each other. One day at the cottage I overheard my parents talking to the Evans, apparently Petunia got her Hogwarts letter, but she refused point blank to attend, she stated that wizards and witches were ‘freaks’ just like all of us. Your grandparents could only gawk at her they had no clue where they went wrong. That was the last I ever saw of her. The next summer when we arrived at the cottage we noticed that one person was missing. With pursed lips your grandfather William Evans said that Petunia went to live with her Aunt and Uncle who lived in the muggle world on your grandmothers side. Your grandmother was a muggleborn witch the only one in her family. Apparently Petunia said that she could finally be around people worth knowing.” James sighed. He had no clue how one such as Petunia Dursley who grew up in the wizarding world could abandon it without ever a glimpse back, he knew of course that their were cases, but it was still sad.

“Wow.” Harry said. “All this time I never knew. All Aunt Petunia would ever say was that how mum got her letter and she never did. But the whole jealousy thing makes sense. So that’s where Dudley gets it from.” Harry stated.

“I guess so.” Was James’ only reply. “But like I said Petunia did get her Hogwarts letter, but she threw it in the fireplace. And now she tells people like us that that never happened. It’s usually easier to tell a lie when you don’t want people knowing the truth.”

“Dad if for some reason they do find us. They won’t take me back to the Dursley’s will they?” Harry stared at his father, changing the subject altogether. He did not care anymore about his Aunt, his main

concern and what was eating up at him was knowing that he could be separated from his father again. Knowing what the answer would be he began trembling.

"Harry, if we are found which is highly unlikely because of all the security I've got placed here, you will never go back to the Dursley's, I'll make sure of it. Plus if I know Dumbledore he won't let his Saviour get away from him again. He'll want to keep you where he can see you and he won't be able to at the Dursley's." James said smiling.

Harry stopped his trembling knowing he was safe his father would not let any harm come to him, but that left still one more question. "What about returning to Hogwarts, how will I do that?" Harry thought about his friends who were still probably at the castle right now wondering what had happened to him.

"I thought it over." James said, after a couple of minutes without anyone talking. "For your seventh year you won't be attending Hogwarts."

"What do you mean I won't be attending Hogwarts?" Harry screamed. He jumped from his place that he was sitting, and looked at his father with his emerald green eyes ablaze. He should have known that that was what James was going to say, but Hogwarts was still his home and he desperately wanted to go back.

"With my warrant out, and with Dumbledore still in control I don't want you going back to Hogwarts, it's not safe for either one of us."

"But Dad, Hogwarts is my home. You can't do that to me. All my friends are there. Ron, Hermione, Neville, Seamus, Dean, and Ginny. I'm going back there. Dumbledore can't do anything to you or me. This is my family. You just said so yourself. That Dumbledore won't let anything happen to me again because I'm the saviour." Harry was panicked. His breathing turning very ragged.

"Yes but that would mean he would never let you return to me." James said, seeing the desperation growing inside of Harry. James had no clue what to do, but if it meant their safety over Harry's

happiness he would have to forfeit it. "I'm sorry Harry, but I've decided, and my decision is final."

"Doesn't my opinion count for anything?" He cried. "I promise dad that once I'm back Dumbledore will take the warrant off. And then he'll have to let me go back to you. Please don't do this to me. I've already lost so much."

James hated to see the boy look so haggard, but he could not take the chance. "I'm sorry Harry, but there's no point in arguing anymore, we'll be moving to France in a couple of days, and you'll be attending Beauxbatons. They can't separate us there."

"I don't want to go to some stupid French school. I don't even speak any French." Harry cried.

"You'll learn. It's not so hard. Trust me."

"I don't want to trust you. I hate you James. I hate you. You can't do this to me."

"You listen to me, and you listen to me good, Harry James Potter. You will do as I say, and what I say will go. We are leaving in two days time. I suggest you start packing your belongings."

"I don't have any. My loving uncle took them all away, or don't you remember." Harry hissed in anger.

"I meant your clothes. And I would watch your mouth if I were you, if you keep talking to me like this you'll be in a lot more trouble than you already are. Now go. Gleazle will take you to your room."

A loud pop was heard as a new house – elf appeared before the two distraught men. "What can Gleazle do you for Master Potter?" The house – elf squeaked.

"Take Harry to his room. That will be all."

"Yes sir." Gleazle nodded to Harry who followed the house – elf into his room. Where he was once again a prisoner.

Harry was more than angry. This was the worst summer that he could ever remember having. It felt like one long-winded nightmare that never seemed to end. His father knew how much he lost, so for the life of him he could not figure out why James would take away the rest of his family. He wondered what Beauxbatons would be like. He had no clue how he would cope, when all he knew in French was “Bonjour, Au Revoir, Oui, and Non.” That would be great if he was always coming, leaving, or if the professors asked yes or no questions. He was sure to fail. Then he thought of the red headed girl his father was asking him to leave behind. He really cared for Ginny and had wanted to ask her out ever since the whole department of mystery fiasco. Now that would be impossible, and if he did ever have the chance, she would most likely be taken. Life was not fair.

[illegible]

James was furious. More than furious he was ready to blast the next thing that came into his view with his wand. It seemed every time him and Harry were making any sort of progress it would be ruined. And instead of taking two steps forward they would take three steps back. Why couldn't Harry see what he was doing was for the best? France is such a beautiful country and Harry would be able to experience things he never had a chance to before.

James just wanted what was best for Harry, like any father would want for his son, but of course Harry had to make things so frustrating that James was ready to rip his hair out. Gone were the days when Harry could be told what to do and he would comply without much protest. Now here was the adolescent Harry who was rebelling with a much faster pace than James and Sirius combined could do or cope with.

He wondered if Harry had grown up with him if he would still act this way. It was hard to tell, it could go either way.



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In the very back sat a lone man. His salt and pepper hair was the only thing that people were able to make out. If a person did get a good look at the man they scurried away as fast as they could. The man looked foreboding. The only person that had the wits to go up to him was Tom. The others looked at the old barkeep with great respect. Yet again it was his job. Tom looked at the man and could see the days Daily Prophet propped up against the napkin dispenser.

“Not today. Thank Merlin.” Remus replied giving Tom a halfhearted smile.

“No thanks, Tom. I’m good. I’ve got to get going soon anyways. Lots of things to do today.” Remus said again, looking at the Daily Prophet, and watched as Tom walked away.

Remus sighed. He had taken residence at the Leaky Cauldron three days ago since James had taken Harry to Snape Manor. He was closer to James if he needed help, and he was also closer to one of their greatest allies, Ollivander, but still it was mostly for Harry and James' benefit.

The last day that he was there and Harry screamed made Remus realize that he needed to be closer just in case.

Remus laid his edition of the daily prophet flat on the table; with a courteous nod to Tom he made his way to the backroom. Remus tapped on the bricks that led to Diagon Alley in a sequential order. The hidden door swung back revealing the most beautiful sight that Remus could see.

The small town with its cobbled streets and old fashion stores looked as if it came out of a fairy tale. The windows were all decoratively displayed alluring the shoppers to take a peak. For a moment Remus got lost in Flourish and Blott's where one book in the display kept changing its colour and form, and another one kept jumping up and down.

The next store that Remus passed was Quality Quidditch Supplies that once again reminded him of his best friend and his son. A snitch was zooming across the window and a newer model of the firebolt was hovering in its place. The Firebolt 2.

Remus made up his mind. True he still was not employed, but he was able to save a great deal by shaving off his rent cost when he went to live at the Order's Headquarters. So he would be able to afford this.

The chime on the door rang alerting the salesperson that a new shopper had entered the store.

"How may I help you sir?" The older wizard asked from behind the counter where it was positioned right by the door.

"I'd like to purchase the Firebolt 2 please." Remus said getting out his galleons.

"Are you sure that one sir? Maybe I can interest you in another one that would be more suitable to your needs." The clerk looked Remus up and down and noticed the state of his clothing.

Remus not oblivious to what was going on shoved the three hundred galleons towards the man. "Yes that one and a snitch to go along with it."



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“Hi Ollivander.” Remus replied his voice equally as grave as the other’s. Jumping into business Remus started, “Any news this morning, or has everything been alright?”

“No, everything is not alright Remus. You must listen to me very quietly. I can feel it in my bones. Somethins’ a brewing, and it would be wise to leave. Just like I’m doing.” He waved his hand to prove his point.

“Why? What’s happening?” Remus asked getting frantic. If something were going to go down like a Death Eater raid he would have to warn the Order then they would have to evacuate all of the residences that lived in or near the Alley. They would all have to be warned.

"I don't know just yet Lupin, but I can tell you I feel it in my bones. Something is going to happen, something horrible and it would be better if you left now when you still had the chance."

"I can't just leave everybody behind. They all need to be warned."

“No time, there isn’t anytime. DO YOU HEAR ME BOY? LEAVE NOW. IT’S YOUR ONLY HOPE FOR SURVIVAL.” Ollivander said with a person who had just been possessed. Then with a sweep of his wand the rest of the remaining unpacked wands leapt into the trunk, and it disappeared along with Ollivander.

Remus raced out of the store getting ready to floo to Dumbledore's office when he was hit with a stray curse. He fell down in a crumpled heap of robes.

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Lucius was not expecting Remus to come out of the storeas fast as he did. If it were not for his great reflexes Remus would have gotten away. Usually he would wait at least half an hour before the werewolf came out, looking mildly happy. Today he looked like he had just witnessed the most horrifying death imaginable. Lucius gathered the crumpled form in his arms, ignoring the newly wrapped packages that had fallen out of the werewolf's hands, and he apparated them away to Malfoy Manor.

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After careful consideration James still knew what he was doing was the right thing for the both of them. He stood up from his spot took one last glimpse of the serene view and went to meet his headstrong son.

He found Harry sitting at the desk writing with a very blunt quill that James made sure to place in his bedroom. Harry had asked for something to write with to let his friends know he was fine.

“Whatcha writing Harry?” James asked moving in beside the boy.



of deepest loathing and flew out of the open window and headed for the Forbidden Forest.

“Figures.” Dumbledore murmured to himself. “The most loyal pets such as a phoenix would go and desert his master.” But then again how could Dumbledore blame Fawkes, when it was Dumbledore that had been betraying everybody else. He just figured that Fawkes was smart enough to know what was going on and did not like it one bit when Dumbledore was playing the Potters for a fool, since it was them that used to be the loyalist out of all the Order Members.

What a day this day was turning out to be. First the ministry and himself could still not find the Potters; which probably meant that James had put on a Fidelius charm around his hideout. Second Remus did not show up for his daily report on how things were faring in the world (yes he did think of Remus as the Potters secret keeper, but he thought it would be too obvious, his next choice was Hagrid. He would have to explore the Giants mind later) and now Fawkes. He wondered what else could possibly go wrong this day. He hoped nothing more he could not take it. He was just too old for these games.

Albus decided that he would need to go to make a trip to Weldash a magical community that excelled in carrying unusual types of magical creatures. That is where he got Fawkes and that’s where he would get another Phoenix. One that was more loyal than that traitor.

He tied his travelling cloak around his neck and he picked up the floo powder that would take him to Hogsmeade where he could apparate to the magical community.

Albus was just about to throw the floo in when he was taken aback by a head floating in his fireplace. He gathered himself off of the floor where he had just fallen, and sat crossed legged having a feeling that this conversation could last awhile.

“Dumbledore.” The voice in the fireplace acknowledged the man.

“Well, well, well. Mr. Potter. I knew I would be the one to find you in the end.” Dumbledore could have clapped his hands for all the delight that he was feeling.

“Actually it was I who found you. And you still have not got me yet.”

“But I can.” The older wizard’s speech turned nasty. “I can just yank you from the fireplace by your hair, if I really wanted to. It would be so much painful on your part. Or I can just track down the floo that you used.” Dumbledore laughed jovially.

“Sorry Dumbledore for bursting your little bubble, but you can’t. This floo is untraceable. I’m not as stupid as you may think I am, there is no way in tracking me and if you do decide to yank me out of the floo I can promise you, you will never see your little ‘golden boy’ ever again. I can assure you that.” James hissed through his teeth.

“Is that why you’re here to offer me your son? I thought you were above all that. But you know James I do care for Harry. I want him to win this war, but he is still like a son to me too.”

“Then why are you acting this way? Why can’t you leave us be?”

“Because right now I’m thinking of the greater good. And the greater good is having Harry here at Hogwarts where he can defeat Voldemort once and for all.”

“Don’t you think it’s bad to hold Harry up so high? He might not even win. For all we know Voldemort might defeat him and then take over the wizarding world like he’s always wanted to do. Not everything works out the way that you want it to Dumbledore. Even you should know that by now.”

“But this will, my boy. This will. So tell me the real reason why you’ve decided to visit me today. I’m sure it wasn’t to debate about who will win in the upcoming war.”

“No it’s not. I’ve come to talk to you about Harry.”

“Oh.” Dumbledore said, not really surprised. Otherwise why else would the man be there?

“I’ve come to make you a deal.”



“What kind of deal Mr. Potter? As you can see you’re not in any real position to bargain with me. I have the upper hand here.”

“No you don’t.” Came the cheeky reply.

“Watch your tongue.” Dumbledore demanded. “Or I might just set the Aurors on you.”

“I’m not going to argue with you Dumbledore. I am here to tell you what I want. If you agree you get Harry back. If not then we go somewhere your little warrant on me won’t be issued.”

“What do you want James.” The older man sounded broken.

“I have three conditions for Harry’s return. My first is that you call off the ministry and say that it was all a misunderstanding, I won’t be charged with something I did not commit, and Harry won’t be taken from me. The second thing is that you stop meddling in mine and my sons life, you will not regard him in any manner outside the student/headmaster relationship, if I hear that you’ve even spoken a word to him that does not have anything to do with his school work the deal is off. The third is that you will stop using my son as a puppet. He’s still a child and I don’t want him being used for any of your schemes. Understood?” James finished with a huff.

Albus considered this for a moment, all the sparkles in his eyes gone. Just as suddenly as they left they returned. “Deal.” He said loud and clear.

“I want it in writing Dumbledore. Your word means nothing to me.” James’ brown eyes turned darker.

Dumbledore grabbed a parchment and quill, and came back to where

James’ head was floating. He wrote down all the conditions that James had mentioned. Sneakily without James being aware Dumbledore made a small unusual motion with his hand, and before anything more could be done, he rolled the parchment up and stuck it in James’ mouth.

"I've signed it as you saw, now all it needs is your signature. Just send it back by owl once you've signed. And your deal is done."

James nodded as his reply considering his mouth was full of parchment.

Dumbledore let out a triumphant smirk as James went away.

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James pulled his head out of the fireplace, and raced back up the stairs to Harry's room. He saw his son pacing the room waiting in anticipation.

“Well?” Harry questioned. “What did he say? Am I allowed to go back?”

Harry looked so desperate that James could not help but torment the boy a little longer.

“Well...” James said. “You know how it is Harry. All the old coot wanted to know was where you were and when I wouldn’t tell him he seemed to repel me from his office. I’m sorry son, but apparently we weren’t able to come to a conclusion. I think I’ll try him again in a couple of days.” James had a hard time trying to keep a straight face when Harry surveyed him as to see if he was telling the truth or lying.

"Did he? So try again now. Plllleeeeeaaaasssseeee." Harry begged.

This time James could not hold back his laughter, and he exploded, rolling on the floor. “Just kidding Harry. Look I have the contract right here waiting for me to sign it. When I do then I’ll owl it out to Dumbledore.” He said pulling the contract out from his robe pockets where he hid it.

"That was not funny." Harry said tears rolling down his face.

James noticing how distressed his son was pulled him into a fierce hug. "Harry I'm so sorry. It was just a joke, a joke. Look at this see I'm going to sign it right now." James conjured up a quill signed it right in

front of Harry. He was too busy consoling Harry that neither one noticed the contract glow a different colour than it should have, and then faded and returned to its normal colour.

Two minutes later after James had finished consoling Harry an owl flew into the room, James tied the contract to the outstretched leg and launched the owl out of the opened window.

When James turned around he saw a grinning Harry. "Two can play at that game." Harry said.

“Why you.” Came James’ reply. He was truly proud of Harry; this was the first time that Harry was ever able to fake him out. He was

becoming a Marauder through and through. Those tears had been fake, a payoff. James now had to think of something to do to get back at Harry.

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Albus Dumbledore beamed in delight when the contract came back without it glowing grey. He waved his wand and muttered “Duplico.” An identical contract appeared on the desk.

Albus took the second contract, wrote a small letter to go along with it and called for a school owl to come forth. He tied the duplicated contract and sent it to the ministry for Fudge to look over. Harry Potter was now his.

It was a simple but brilliant idea. The little hand movement that he had done earlier hid a little clause in the contract that nobody could see unless they used a revealing charm. It stated that once Harry returned to Hogwarts James had to give up all parental and visiting rights, until Dumbledore sees in the future that James is fit to be reinstated with those privileges. He, however, would never give James those rights back. Harry was now his to bend him to his will he had his missing link back and that was all that mattered.

The only problem that he could see was Harry. His temper was famous throughout the school. Nobody ever wanted to get on Harry's

bad side. But for now he would not worry about Harry. It was not for another couple of weeks until school started, and once it did he would break Harry until he submitted to go along with fate, and defeat Voldemort.

He gave a sigh, remembering how he used to not feel this way about the boy. At the beginning he really truly honestly cared about Harry, and Harry's feelings, but that was when things were going his way. Now that they were not Albus could care less about the boy. His main goal was to bring down the darkest wizard of all times.

Dumbledore leaned back into his chair. There was absolutely nothing that James Potter could do now. The law was on Dumbledore's side, the contract was legal. Yes the facts were misleading, but in the wizarding world it is required for a wizard who is signing a contract to look it over for any hidden or concealing charms placed upon it. If the wizard or witch does not and they sign the contract, then they are binded by magical law, and they cannot go against it.

Dumbledore chuckled again to himself and he made his way to the floo to go where he had been planning to go. Weldash.

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Remus woke up with a groggy start. He remembered leaving Ollivanders after the crazy old man yelled at him to leave. Then he had no idea what happened afterwards or how he got to where he was. He knew one thing for sure he was not alone. He could smell another's presence close to him. It was nearing the full moon and whenever the new moon made its appearance his senses would heighten, on any normal day his senses would work just like everyone else's.

“Who’s there?” Remus asked with more conviction in his voice that he felt at the moment. “Show yourself, or are you just cowardly.”

“Nice puppy.” Lucius’ voice drawled soothingly. “I did not bring you here to hurt you. I brought you here to do me a favour.”

Remus recognizing the voice was startled. What favour would Malfoy think he would do for him? He would never do anything for Malfoy; he had got to be kidding him.

“And what favour do you think that I will do for you Malfoy?”

Lucius leaned down closer to the crouched man on the floor and whispered in his ear. “You’re going to tell me where the Potter’s are, then I’m going to obliviate you.” He smirked standing back up and taking in the look on the Wolf’s face.

Remus’ eyes grew wide. He would never tell Lucius where James and Harry were, not even if they were under the Fidelius charm. He could not take the chance. He got up and tried to scramble away to find the door.

Lucius watched Remus trying to find the exit. In all honesty it was quite amusing. He knew the werewolf could see perfectly well even though it was pitch black, but he was looking at all corners of the square room looking for the exit, even though there clearly was none. Lucius had charmed away the door. To leave Lucius would just apparate, after all they were in Malfoy Manor.

“Damn you Malfoy. Damn you to hell.” Remus screamed. “You can keep me here forever and I still will not tell you where they are.”

“That can be arranged Wolf.” Lucius said vindictively. In a quick movement that even surprised Remus to the point that he could not move, Lucius bared down on him and poured something cold down his throat.

Lucius could see the affects of the Veritaserum taking its effect. Remus’ eyes became glazed, and his face drew a blank.

“Where are James and Harry Potter?” He asked.

“Snape Manor.” Came the hollow reply.

“What wards are set up and what are the counter curses to them?”

“There are many wards that are broken and can easily be brought down.”

“Well, well, well. It seems that it would be much easier than I thought it would.” Lucius was glowing with happiness.

“No it won’t, you maybe able to know where Snape Manor is, but James has a Fidelius charm placed on him and Harry, but only in the boundaries of the house. If taken outside those boundaries they can be found.”

“Excellent. Good Wolf. Now what’s the password?” Lucius licked his lips in anticipation.

“I don’t know. Not the secret keeper.”

A growl erupted in frustration. “Well then who is the secret keeper?”

“Harry Potter.” A confused voice was sounding.

Lucius could tell that the Veritaserum was wearing off. He did not give his captive much, only enough to give the information. Knowing that Remus was not the secret keeper brought a crestfallen look on the Silver haired man’s face. This was not right. If Harry Potter was the secret keeper than there was no way that they would be found. Before the potion wore off completely Lucius dove in for one last question. “Can you bring them to me?”

A half nod came from the man. Remus could have died right on the spot. He knew that it could not be helped, but he felt so ashamed for his weakness. He spat at the man before him.

“You may have got me to answer your questions Malfoy, but that does not mean I will bring them to you.” He growled.

“Yes you will. See I’m the one with the wand and you Wolf are not. Imperio.”

Remus could not avoid the spell that hit him. Again his eyes turned to glass.

“You will bring the Potters to me.” Lucius hissed. “By whatever means you may. Just bring them back here to me.”

Remus at first tried fighting back. He questioned himself about why he would want to betray his best friend, and why would he ever do anything Malfoy wanted him to do, but in the end Malfoy's strong voice telling him to do it made up his mind for him. He used Malfoy's fireplace after being given back his wand and called out through a voice that was not his, "Snape Manor."

Lucius watched the man go. The Potters were his.

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James and Harry had finally settled down inside the large house. They were just sitting and talking basking in the warmth that surrounded them.

“Can we go to Diagon Alley tomorrow?” Harry asked from where he was sitting. “I need to get school supplies.”

“Maybe, but we’ll have to wear invisibility cloaks. One of the house – elves will have to come with us to do the orderings.” James considered this thought. The warrant for his arrest would not be lifted until Harry was back at school, which meant that they had to be extra careful, and take extra precautions.

“I know instead can I ask Hermione and Ron to meet us. We’ll wear the cloaks, but they’re used to me being invisible. Then we won’t have to take a house – elf.”

James knew that Harry had done much sneaking around in Hogsmeade. He chuckled when he remembered Draco Malfoy running into his office or should he say Snape's, with mud all over his face.

“What’s so funny?” Harry asked noticing James’ far away look.

“Just remembering your third year. You got Malfoy really good. Yea ask them if they want to come, the more the merrier. Let them know

though that you will not be able to be seen. And they must not speak your name or mine when we're out. Give us code names if they must use something. Then after Diagon Alley if you want we can all come back here. Where you can spend some time with your friends before you go back. But the same rules still apply. " James stressed, and by the look on Harry's face, he could tell which rules those meant.

“Thank you so much, Dad. I’m going to go and Owl them right now. Oh and Dad. I was wondering do you think it would be alright if I get another pet. I think I’m ready, just don’t know if I want an owl or not.”

“That will be more than alright.”

Harry rushed out of the room that he did not see Remus standing there. He bumped right into him, knocking Harry to the floor.

“Sorry Remus, I didn’t see you there.”

"It's fine." Remus said his voice much harsher than it normally was.

Harry gave a puzzled glance at Remus. He was not acting the way that he normally would have. Harry shrugged it off, his father would tell if Remus was in his right mind or not.

He got up off of the floor and went to his room to Owl his friends. He watched until the owl was out of eyesight.

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Remus had overheard the conversation. He floored just in time to hear that James and Harry would be going to Diagon Alley tomorrow, and not only would it be him, it would include the Weasley and Granger girl. This was the means he was hoping for, a ruse to get them out of the house.

That was when the boy had bumped into him. He did not know why, usually he was friendly with Harry, and he liked the boy. Today he just wanted to throttle his skinny little neck. He heard the boy apologize and then scramble away to his blasted room.



“Well Moony, it looks like you have a way with children.” James chuckled, but just like Harry he knew instantly that something was amiss about his friend.

“I just came by to see how you two were doing.” Remus’ voice sounded like he could care less.

“We’re fine.” James arched his eyebrows, studying his friend. “How’re you doing Remus?”

“Great. Never better.” Again there was coldness in his eyes.

James not liking the way that Moony was acting and talking tried his best to get him to leave.

“Moony, I hate to do this to you, but me and Harry we were just planning to spend some time together. Things are progressing well, and I was hoping that it would just be us tonight.”

“No problem James. I have to be going myself. I’ll see you tomorrow.” Remus walked out of the room.

Once Remus was gone, James re warded the house, excluding Moony from entering. He did not know what was up with his friend, but he was not willing to take the chance.

“Dad?”

James heard a small voice calling from the banister. “Yea.”

“Is Remus ok?”

“Yea, he just had too much firewhiskey to drink. He’s fine.”

“Ok.”

James heard the sound of footsteps retreating back into the room. He let out a sigh. Tomorrow they would have to be careful. He did not know what got into Remus, but he sure did not like it.



Dumbledore sat staring out of his office window looking out at the great lake before him. He saw Harry's friends sitting down and talking. It looked like they were in a heated discussion. But from faraway he could not tell. At least he still had control over a few things. The day that Harry disappeared Molly Weasley had been contacted. He had told her everything that happened, and like he expected she took it rather hard. Her fussing was so over done that by the end he decided it would be better for the Weasley's and Granger to just stay put at Hogwarts. Molly agreed thinking that it would keep her children safe from Death Eater attacks or from You – Know – Himself. Together they thought it best to keep Kingsley at Hogwarts, extra protection for the children. This made Dumbledore smile even more it was never for the children, Shacklebolt made a great spy.

Albus looked at the children who looked so happy. In all due time the world would know happiness once more.

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"I'm still not getting this." Ginny's wail rebounded off of the lake's water and it seemed to hit everyone's ears in a loud torrent.

The teens bored of being cooped up inside all the time since Harry's departure had finally persuaded Shacklebolt to let them outside. It was not like any of them could pull a Harry. They were all forbidden to ride on brooms until School started again. That suited Hermione just fine. So there was really no escape. It was nice to be out in the fresh air. Granted it was evening and in a couple of hours they would be heading for bed, it was still nice.

Hermione leaned over Ginny's shoulders to see what was upsetting the younger girl. She took a quick glance at Ginny's homework sheet and saw where the problem lay. "All you did was mix up one of the numbers. Here." Hermione said as she pulled the piece of homework away. She crossed off the wrong one and added in the right one. "And there you get 4. Which means that unfortunately you won't be returning to Hogwarts this coming year." Hermione shoved the piece of parchment back towards its owner.

"Yes I will. I have to I don't think mum's going to pull me out right before school's going to start." Ginny pouted tears welling up in her eyes at this statement. If she did not return to Hogwarts she would never see Harry again.

"Ginny you never told us that mum was transferring you." Fred said taking his eyes away from the giant squid to examine his younger sister.

"I didn't know about it either. Maybe she was planning on telling me next week, before school actually started." Ginny looked imploringly at her brothers, silently asking for help.

Ron finished his potions essay that he had been working on. It took him the better part of the day, and he was tired. He passed it on to Hermione with a pleading look. Rolling her eyes she accepted it and started to make the corrections.

"Ginny you're not going to another school, relax. Arithmancy is nothing more than rubbish. It's exactly like regular divination just more complicated and with a lot of numbers." Ron said looking quite abashed as his essay got handed back to him a lot of red flitting around the pages pointing to him where the mistakes needed to be fixed.

"That's not true Ronald Weasley. Arithmancy is very accurate. It predicted that I would break my nose before exams." Ginny huffed out in indignation.

"The only reason why you broke your nose Ginny is because you weren't watching where you were going. If it was not because of that you would never have walked where Peeves was playing the pranks. Any second year and above knows enough to keep their eyes open at all times."

"I resent that." Ginny huffed.

The twins glowered at Ron they were very defensive of their younger sister.

“Don’t worry Ginny. Ron’s just a big nosed Prat.” George said and glowered at his younger brother.

“Oh shut up the lot of you.” Ron yelled, crossing out his mistake on the parchment and rewriting it to make it correct.

“See Ron if you just did your homework at the start of the summer holidays you could be relaxing like me.” Hermione leaned back into the grass staring out at the night sky.

Ron folded up his parchment and went to join her. He hugged her close to his chest and they just sat gazing at the stars lost in each other’s embrace.

Ginny looked at Ron and Hermione longingly. Wishing that she had whatever they had with Harry. She imagined how it would be to lean into his chest, and have him wrap his arms around her where she would be able to get lost in them. She would turn her head towards his and lips would meet lips. Ginny fingered her lips; she could almost taste Harry on her. She sighed deeply, how sweet it would be. Ginny shook her head. Now was not the time to be thinking of that. She refocused her attention back to her assignment and onto the next question, where would she be in five years from now? “Who knows?” She said aloud and closed her books shut for the day. Her concentration level was completely gone. She was done for the day.

They all sat staring at the wondrous sight around them. The early evening sky was filled with a few stars already twinkling millions of miles away, it made Hogwarts seem more whimsical than it ever did in the time that they were there. It seemed that it held promises. Promises of a better tomorrow. Promises for a peaceful and happy life. No one could argue with that, that’s what they were looking forward to.

“Hey look at that.” Ron said pointing with his free hand at the sky where an obsolete object was moving.

Hermione took the wandering hand and placed it across her waist where it fell and took hold of her possessively. Ginny had to look away; she found it unfair that Harry could not do that with her.

"It's nothing Ron. It's just a shooting star or something." Ron just shrugged too happy really to even care that his girlfriend was patronizing him.

"No you're wrong Hermione." Ginny said getting a clearer view of the object. "It's an owl."

"Wonder who sent it." Said Ron, getting eye rolls from everybody around him.

"It's pretty obvious. Ronniekins. Harry." George said. At times Ron could be so stupid.

Ron's whole face went red and he buried it in Hermione's cloak. Everybody laughed at that. Hermione just rolled her eyes again and shrugged it off as if it happened all the time.

The owl now closer swooped down on them, and Ginny gave a little yelp as she thought that it was going to fly straight into her. Which it did not. Instead it stopped just in front of her with an easy landing. Ginny grabbed the letter from the owl before anybody else could. She opened it up and scanned it quickly, eyeing it for any signs of trouble. When she was satisfied that there were no hints of needing help like there was in the summer, she read it fully out loud so that everybody could hear.

*Dear Ron, Hermione, Ginny, Fred, and George*

*What can I say? I don't even know how to start this. I must say that I could have never asked for better friends than you. Thank you guys for saving me in more ways than you'll ever know. I'm sorry for the other night (you know which one I mean) if I scared anybody I'm truly sorry. I never meant to. I'm doing much better now. My dad and me seem to be getting along a lot better now. Hardly anymore fights, even though we had a pretty bad one the other day, but it was funny and of course I won. I always win."* At this point they could hear Harry's laughter and cheekiness when he wrote this. They all smiled for their friend's happiness. Ginny continued, reading. *"The reason why I'm writing was first of all I knew you guys would be worried and the second is because I finally convinced my dad to take me to Diagon Alley to purchase my school supplies. I was hoping that if you*

*all were able to you would want to join us there. Of course my dad and me would be under our invisibility cloaks, Dumbledore has refused to lift the warrant for my dad's arrest until I come back in September, I'll let you know all about that afterwards, but it would still be fun. Just like old times. If you can we were thinking for around noon by Gringott's that's only if you can get away. Owl me back, Cleo knows to wait for a response." Love you all Harry.*" Ginny finished reading the letter and set it down gingerly, not entirely letting it go. It felt like it was her only lifeline to Harry.

Ron jumped from his spot where he was laying with Hermione. "Well what are you waiting for? Owl him back. Let him know we're coming." He shouted at his sister.

"Yea right, and do you really think Shacklebolt will just let us leave? We have both Dumbledore and your mother against us. He's not going anywhere." Hermione said tiredly, pointing at the man sitting by a tree a good couple of feet away from them. "We should tell Harry that we'll have to see him on the Hogwarts express."

"You guys can stay, but me and Fred will go. Nobody can stop us from coming or going, we're legal, not our mother and especially not Dumbledore." George said. "So who's with us?"

"I'm definitely going." Ginny said glaring at anybody who dared refuse her.

"I'm in." Ron said to.

"I guess I'm in as well." Hermione sounded dejected.

"Great." Ginny yelled. She went to write a quick letter to Harry, voicing their consent to the meeting.

"Wait. How are we going to know they're there, if they're both under the invisibility cloak?" Hermione looked at Ginny, as she was just about to tie the letter to Cleo's leg.

Ginny took back the letter and wrote a small message and then retied it to Cleo's leg. She knew she would drive Hermione mad with the want of knowing what was written. She smiled inwardly holding in her





James studied Harry as if he were examining the boy for any cuts or bruises.

“Dad I just fell that was it. Remus DID NOT DO ANYTHING.” Harry had to emphasize the word to make James see that nothing wrong had happened. “You’re too over protective I’ve looked after myself for sixteen years; I don’t need anybody to start babying me now.”

“For one I know Remus did not look like he was doing anything, but he can be extremely tricky when he wants to be, and conniving. You have never really seen the real him before, at least the one that I know. Secondly as I know you have noticed considering you were listening by the landing, you overheard everything, Remus was acting differently, not himself and I don’t know what’s coming over him, so of course I have to be protective. Third I’m not ‘babying’ you as you so nicely put it, but what kind of father would I be if I weren’t a little concerned?” James pierced his son with a gaze that if Harry could he would be under a rock hiding at the moment, but there was nowhere to go anyways, he was still locked in his room.

“So then tell me if you’re not babying me, how come I’m still locked in my room, how come you haven’t trusted me enough yet to let me come and go as freely as I want to? Even at Hogwarts Dumbledore let me wander the halls, he knew I had your invisibility cloak.”

“Dumbledore did not have to see his only child lying in a pool of blood. Dumbledore did not have to clean that blood up and Dumbledore was the main cause of this whole thing.”

“Not everything can be blamed on Dumbledore.” Harry stated in a simple statement.

“And what is that supposed to mean.”

“I mean you’ve been blaming Dumbledore for everything, what about you? You’re still at fault to you know.” This was said as more of a statement then a question. Harry turned away; he was embarrassed for the words that came out of his mouth. How could he just say those things to his father? Right now he could not look his dad in the eyes.

James grabbed his son by the shoulders and made him face him again. His breathing ragged, he felt as if he was just punched in the stomach. He eyed Harry critically, but he knew that it was not Harry's fault. Harry was just trying to push him away the only way he knew how.

"I know what you're doing Harry, and let me tell you something, it's not going to work." James held onto Harry's shoulder tightly as Harry fought to get away.

"You don't know what I'm doing you still don't know anything about me." Harry cried.

"I know a lot more about you than you may think." James said.

"No, you don't. Nobody knows anything about me. All people see when they look at me is the bloody – boy – who- lived."

"Know what I see when I look at you?" James asked.

"Not in particular, no." Harry retorted back.

"I see a young boy, who has had too much to deal with since he was a baby. I see a boy who is fighting with every fibre in his body not to break down. I see a boy who has been abused, I also see a boy who has been loved. I have also seen a boy who is scared to be loved. I see a boy who has had to carry the weight of the world on his shoulders, and I see a boy who just wants to be a boy. But most of all, I see Harry, my son." James took the trembling boy in his arms and quietly he rocked his son in his arms. His entire life all his son ever wanted was to be normal, and James knew that, and now James would do his best to provide that to Harry.

Their silence was rocked when a loud tapping on the windowpane was heard. They both jumped from being startled.

"What was that?" Harry yelled and he ran to get a better look outside.

Before Harry reached the window James pulled him back afraid that there was somebody out there to hurt their small family. He shook his

head as if he was berating himself for being so stupid. The new wards would not permit anybody to enter into their Manor.

A shadow landed on the carpet, one that resembled a hawk. When James had a better look out the window, though the sky was now velvet black, a ruffled owl looked menacingly into the room.

James opened up the window, and in came Cleo, not looking the least bit happy about being kept outside for so long. James untied the note from the poor animal's leg.

"Better get her a treat Harry, she doesn't look too happy to me."

"Does that mean I have permission to leave my room. I don't have any treats up here." Harry, who had forgotten about the argument that had just happened, now remembered and it looked like clouds were hovering over the boy's head.

James was ready for the storm. "Harry look." James waved his wand, and then gave a gesture for Harry to leave his room without James' permission.

"I'm not that stupid. You probably cursed the door so that instead of it just throwing me back when I try to leave, it's probably going to shock me as well."

"You're right Harry, because I would love to see my son getting executed every time he tried to get through the door, it will give me great pleasure let me tell you that, you know something for my amusement when I get bored."

"Funny, very funny." Harry rolled his eyes at his father.

"But if you insist on acting like this I can easily put the wards back on and as you said the very first day here, you can stay in your little 'prison' but it's up to you." James made a move that looked like he was ready to put back on the wards.

Harry realizing that he was just giving up on almost total freedom ran to the door and stepped into the hallway. He laughed when nothing

happened and then ran back into the room, and out. He ran down the stairs and came back with a box of treats for Cleo.

"Thanks Dad." Harry said sheepishly.

"You earned the privilege." James smiled back at his son. "But I think you better hurry with the treat, Cleo looks like she's ready to bite your finger off the way she keeps looking at you." And James was right, for Cleo kept giving both of them looks of disgust.

Harry handed Cleo a treat in return, and she flew away as if afraid she would be sent out on another message.

"Well aren't you going to open it?" James asked.

"Oh yeah right. Almost forgot."

Harry opened the letter and read what it said.

*"Dear Harry,*

*We got your letter and we are so glad to hear that you are doing well. But rest assured that if you do anything so stupid again like that you won't live to see another day. How could you give us such a scare like that, after we worked so hard to getting you out of there for the day? but I guess it worked out for the best, because you and you're dad seem to be getting on better. Life here at Hogwarts is not fun right now. Dumbledore insists that we have to have a babysitter everywhere we go, and Shackbolt is ours. We cannot go anywhere without him following us. The only reprieve we get is when we have to use the loo and even then we all have to stick together as if it's some sort of school outing (for some reason Ron insisted I put that in). Harry could just see Ginny rolling her eyes; he knew Ginny wrote the letter, because he did not recognize it as any of the others. " We can't wait to see you. Tomorrow by Gringott's sounds really good. We just have to come up with a way to leave Shackbolt's grip. HAHA. The only problem is that if both you and your father are going to be under the invisibility cloak, how will we know where you both are. Hermione thinks a bit of a better way would be better. Please reply. We won't send one back, because we'll probably be getting this tomorrow before we leave, but either way we will be there.*

*Love always, Ginny, Ron, Hermione, Fred, and George."*

“What are we going to do?”

"I think the best solution would be if you go under the invisibility cloak, and I just change into an older man. With everything going on I forgot that I could." James ruffled Harry's hair and then left the room to leave Harry for some privacy.

Harry wrote another letter to his friends telling them of the change in plans. He then called for another owl to take the letter away.

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Albus Dumbledore went to bed early. He later regretted it, as he was not having a good sleep. He saw many Harry's and James floating around accusing him of killing them. He bolted upright, waking in a cold sweat. Thoughts running through his head. At last he figured that he already owned the boy, why not give him something that he would want, until he returned to Hogwarts in a couple of days.

He went to the floo and had a long conversation with Fudge. Fudge agreed with much coercion and by tomorrow morning, before the sunrise things would settle themselves rightly, until the real war began.

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The boy's dormitory was alive with four bodies rummaging around the room looking for pyjamas. The circular room looked like a hurricane had just passed through. Clothes were strewn all along the floor, and beds. Not one bit of flooring could be seen. Hermione pushed her way through the wads of bodies and was able to manage to get to the wardrobe that held her clothes neatly.

“See if you all unpacked properly, and hung things up you guys would not be fighting over tops and bottoms, or for the love of God Ginny here you could borrow these.” Hermione flung Ginny a ghastly

looking nightgown, it was pink, blue, and orange, and it had bows all around.

Ginny who had been arguing with Ron over a t – shirt that she says he threw out, because it no longer fit him properly and that was five years ago, caught the nightgown, took one look at it and threw it back at Hermione, which landed on the bushy haired girls face. “Thanks mum, but I think I’ll stick to this top.”

“Over my dead body, Gin. This is my favourite top.” Ron yelled at his sister.

“You threw it away a long time ago, you Git.” Ginny screamed at him.

Fred who had enough of the squabbling gave Ginny the clean top that he had found.

“Thanks.” Ginny said as she flounced to the loo to change.

Hermione followed Ginny to change as well. Annoyed that she was only trying to help and all she got back in return was a nightgown in her face.

When the two girls re-emerged from the loo ten minutes later it was to three boys arguing quite loudly.

“If you two don’t be quiet I think you’ll wake everybody in the castle up.” Hermione said slipping into the bed by the window the one closer to Ron’s.

“What’s all the fighting about?” Ginny took the easier way out to get the arguing to stop.

“Why don’t you ask this bloody genius over here.”

“Well let’s see you come up with something better, you great big ars...”

“That’s enough. If you don’t tell us what’s up in two minutes than forget about it I’m going to sleep.” Hermione lectured all of them.

"If you must stick your nose into other people's business 'Mione we're just having a wonderful, enthusiastic, fantastic, conversation about how we're all going to slip through Kingsley's leash." George said.

"Lay off her, she didn't do anything."

"Isn't that cute little icky Ronniekins defending his wittle giwlfwiend?" Fred mocked his younger brother.

Ron was ready to retaliate when a voice stopped them. "Must we go through this again? Why does their always have to be some kind of argument going on. When are you three going to grow up and start acting like men instead of little boys. Maybe you all do need babysitters." Ginny's face turned a deep red from her ramblings, she was short of breath and she looked ready to kill.

Sorry's could be heard throughout the room.

"That's better." Ginny coaxed them as if they were all five years old.

"So what was the brilliant idea about getting away from Shackbolt?"

"Honestly it's quite simple, me and Fred are going to transfigure one of the beds into a fireplace and then we'll all floo down to our shop. We'll mind the store as it has been awhile since we last saw it, and we need to start returning to work, while the three of you guys go visit Harry. Then I suggested that you all bring him to our shop first."

"What's wrong with that?" Ginny eyed Ron.

Ron who's ears had turned red from arguing asked, "Are you serious Gin? First off the bloody fireplace won't be connected to the floo network. Then if they do try to connect the fireplace we'll have the ministry on our backs, or in other words Dumbledore, and then there would be no way he would let us leave."

"This is so stupid." Hermione cried. "Just walk out of the front entrance. Dumbledore and Shackbolt cannot stop at least three of us. I'm not a Weasley so I can say I'm going home to visit my parents, Fred and George are allowed to leave, because they're of age, and

as for you two,” She pointed to Ron and Ginny, “You guys are just coming home with me. Simple as that.”

“What if that doesn’t work?” Ron asked.

"It will." Hermione said matter of factly, and then turned over and went to sleep.

The rest of the room soon followed in turn each lost in their own thoughts.

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James woke up to the early morning light that was streaming through his curtains. He had a nightmare, and was not sure he would ever be able to get out of it, until the sunlight approached, he rushed to Harry's room, he needed once more to make sure that everything was fine in that room. There was something about today that left an uneasy feeling in the pit of his stomach, but when he saw the nest of hair that was his son's, as the rest of Harry was hidden away under the blankets, he pushed the feeling aside and went to make breakfast.

He turned on the Wizarding Wireless, listening to the newest song by the Weird Sister. Harry had gotten him hooked on that group; he decided that if the Weird Sisters ever came to perform in England he would take Harry. That would be a treat for the boy, he knew that Harry was always left out of things at the Dursley's, and he had to make it up to him.

“Attention, Attention.” The newscaster on the wireless announced. “We have been informed by the Ministry for Magic that Harry Potter has been found alive and safe. Mr. Potter has been deemed innocent and no charges will be brought to him. We here at the Wizarding Wireless would like to welcome home our young saviour of the wizarding world, and congratulations to Mr. Potter in finding his son. This wonderful news will be heard for the next twenty – four hours every half hour on the dot.”

James who had been holding the frying pan in his hand let it go, and with a tumultuous bang the pan fell to the floor, and so did James.



crying. Him and Harry were free. He officially now had his son back, he did not even question why the warrant had been called off, when Harry did not return yet to Hogwarts, but he was not complaining. Tears were streaming down his face, freedom. He did not even hear his son entering the room.

“Dad.” A small voice sounded breaking James’ thoughts of freedom.

James glanced at where the noise was coming from. Then he saw his son, small, and raggedy looking from sleep. Harry rubbed his eyes, wiping away the sleep that had gathered there during the night.

“Dad.” Harry tried again. When he was finally able to open his eyes properly from the heaviness that his eyes were feeling, due to tiredness, he saw tears running down James’ face. Harry’s heart stopped. His mind raced with things that he had done to cause his father so much distress. “Dad what’s wrong? I’m sorry I didn’t mean to do anything, I’m so sorry.”

James realized what Harry was talking about, and by the look on Harry’s face; Harry thought that he was responsible for James’ tears.

“Harry you didn’t do anything, nothing my son. We’re free. Dumbledore has apparently called everything off, I can go to Diagon Alley as a free man, and you can go not having to fear being taken away by the Ministry. Everything is turning out right for once.”

“You mean...”

“Yes I mean.” James interrupted.

They both smiled and started jumping up and down; screaming finally having some fun without the worries that usually went along with that. For once they were carefree and to them it was all that mattered.

When they were done with all the yelling and the jumping around James finished preparing their breakfasts. It was an old hobby of his and he refused to allow the house – elves to prepare the food, when he was certainly capable of making it.

“There are a few things we still need to discuss.” James said as he put down his half eaten piece of toast.

“Like what?” Harry questioned through a swallow of his own.

“Like how it’s still dangerous Harry. I know we I mean I have been given a so – called pardon, but still we need to be careful. I want you to take one of my old wands with you, until I can get you a new one today at Ollivanders and I give you full permission to use magic any way that you want to. Do I make myself clear.”

“I can’t use magic Dad, I’m not legal if I use it one more time I’ll be expelled.”

“Harry, you can’t believe all that drivel. If they wanted to you would have been expelled by now. They’re not going to take the chance and get rid of the only one they know who can save them all from Voldemort.”

“But all the letters... The trial.” Harry choked out.

“It was all staged or at least most of it. The trial would have ended up the same way, no matter what. You are too precious to them to lose.”

“Hey dad, you don’t need a disguise anymore and I don’t need the invisibility cloak. That’s so great. I’m done can we go now, please?” Harry said swallowing his last bite of his sausage.

James laughed he knew that he could not deny Harry anything. No matter what, he was such a pushover, but he would not have it any other way.

“Alright let’s go.” James got up from the table, but was almost knocked down when Harry pushed past him.

“We’re not using the floo.” James said, stepping up beside Harry.

“Then how are we getting there?” Harry asked in bewilderment.

“We’re going to apparate. At least I am, and you’ll just have to hold on to me. The floo network can’t be trusted much anymore, as it is set

with the Ministry.” James took one look at Harry’s face; he saw a look of trepidation. “Don’t worry Harry, you’ve already apparated before when you were unconscious, I can assure you all you will feel is a slight discomfort in your body and that’s all.”

Harry nodded he wanted to be able to apparate, but if it was anything like a portkey he would have to pass.

“Come on Harry, got everything you need.” Harry nodded his head and followed James out into the wonderful day.

James pulled Harry close to him and then they vanished without a trace, in the middle of the nosiest, busiest, day Diagon Alley had been unable to witness lately due to certain circumstances.

Harry was starting to feel uncomfortable, it seemed that everybody in the wizarding community knew that he was going to be there today. All eyes focused on him, unabashedly. Harry shied away into James’ cloak. For some reason he was not liking the attention and it seemed different. He decided that he changed his mind and wanted to go home.

“Dad can we go home? I don’t think I can do this.”

“In a few hours your friends will be here. You can’t just desert them now, they’re expecting you to be here.” James hoped that using Harry’s friends, as a guilt trip would work.

“But their stares, I can’t handle it right now. I want to go home.” Harry cried his eyes starting to unfocus.

“They’re only here because they probably got excited when they found out you’ve returned and that I’m not a kidnapper. They’re probably feeling safer, just ignore them, like you used to do, when I was the snarky potions master, and you were the insufferable brat, yeah?”

“Alright.” Harry grumbled, not at all too pleased about having to stay here. He was feeling out of sorts since this crazy summer started and as much as he used to welcome an audience he couldn’t quite hack it anymore.

“Everybody should be here in a couple of hours, right?”

“Yeah.”

“Why don’t we grab an ice cream at Florean Fortescue’s.”

“Sounds good.” Harry said cheering up at his favourite ice cream parlour.

James chuckled and led Harry away for some nice cold ice cream; he knew that would cheer his son up.

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Ginny Weasley awoke to a feeling of stinging at her ears. She opened her bleary eyes, wondering what it could be. She lifted her hands and was quite taken aback when she felt something furry by her ears. She gave a loud scream and tried flicking whatever was on her bed, but to no avail, her screams continued.

George who had been sleeping peacefully too had fallen out of bed with a grunt, and a very big, “What in bloody hell is going on?”

Hermione had sat bolt upright without opening her eyes, which made it very difficult on her because she was trying to attempt to use her eyes to see what was going on. Fred gave the same reaction as George, but he did not end up falling. Ron, however, seemed to be the only one who did not wake up with all the commotion that was going on around him.

“Something’s on my bed, and it was chewing on my ears.” Ginny cried out loud. She jumped off of her bed and went to Fred’s where he allowed her permission to jump under the covers. He used to do that when she was little and had a bad dream, he would sing her a lullaby until she fell asleep. He was always the protector.

George got up off the floor and went to investigate. When he saw what it was he broke down in a tirade of laughter. "Ginny it's only an owl." He said between chokes of laughter. He swiped away the tears that had fallen from his eyes, due to laughing so hard.

Peeking out over the covers Ginny's face turned a bright red. "Sorry guys. I wasn't expecting that." Everybody joined in the laughter, (except for Ron he was still sleeping) and once the sting of the embarrassment wore off Ginny did to.

"What does it say?" Hermione asked anxiously.

"It says that Harry can't wait to see us and that things have changed. He's still going to be under the invisibility cloak, but Mr. Potter won't be. Apparently Mr. Potter will be disguised as an older man. Harry says that his father came up with a password to ask him if we're not sure it's them. The password we say is Saviour, and the reply will be Survivor." George said skimming through the letter and then telling them the gist of it.

Everybody smiled at the password, true Harry was a saviour, but to them he would be more and right now he definitely was a survivor. They all held the greatest respect for their young friend.

"I guess somebody should wake up sleeping beauty." George said pointing at Ron.

"I'll do it." Hermione volunteered herself. She walked the two steps to Ron's bed and poked him hard in his back, usually that woke him up.

Ron just swatted away the sting and with a mighty huff he said, "I already told you I didn't want anymore." And he rolled over onto his stomach.

"Ronald Bilius Weasley, get your lazy arse out of bed this instant." Hermione shrieked.

That got him up and he looked around bewildered. Then he stocked off into the loo in an angry huff.

"He'll get over it soon." Hermione said, she was used to that, he did it all the time at the Burrow.

They just sat on their beds waiting for Ron to come out of the lavatory; all were still tired, and were just basking in the silence.

“So are we going or what?” Ron said as he was coming out of the loo, a pure scowl of loathing was on his face.

“Here Ron have this.” Hermione passed him a cup of the strongest tea she could find, with a splash of pepper – up in there.

Ron took the tea out of her hands and drank it fully, immediately he began to feel better. “Thanks Hermione. Has anyone told you lately how wonderful you are?” He leaned down to give her a kiss.

Ginny threw a pillow at them. “Stop it. You’re not starting a whole make – out session right in front of us again. Last time you made everybody sick.”

“You’re just jealous.” Ron said, as he broke free of Hermione’s lips.

“No I’m not.” Ginny convincingly denied the truth.

“I’m tired of this, if you guys aren’t going to come, I’ll just leave by myself.” Hermione prepared for another fight. She had no clue how all seven Weasley children survived their teenage years, all they did was squabble amongst themselves. Hermione was quite surprised how none of them had yet to kill one another, but it was love that kept them from doing that, the Weasley’s were a fierce bunch of people when it came to protecting one of their own.

“We’re coming. They were all going to head out the front door and just use the fireplace in the common room. They all stumbled back in the room when Hermione was knocked to the ground by a large body. Five pairs of eyes looked up at one extremely mad Kingsley Shacklebolt.

“Where do you think you’re going?” Kingsley asked not showing his amusement. He really did like the children, but with Albus basically in charge, and that dunderhead of the Minister being manipulated by Albus, Kingsley had not much of a choice, he had to act so cold and mean.

“That is none of your business, me and Fred have every right to go where we want to, and you have no control over us.” And with that

George and Fred pushed past Kingsley, and headed for the common room.

"I may not have any control over the two of you," He said to the two retreating backs, "But if you all want to go see Harry and James at Diagon Alley today I suggest you first stun me."

The twins stopped mid -step, the others just oggled Shacklebolt, not believing what he was saying.

"I heard everything last night, I did not become one of the top Aurors for nothing." He smiled.

"If you're the top Auror that would look suspicious to know that defenceless kids could beat you." Ginny said.

Shacklebolt bent down so he was on eye level with the youngest Weasley child. “Not if this Auror was so exhausted from watching you lot that he fell into a deep sleep and before he knew it he was stunned.” All were astonished at Shacklebolt. “Now I suggest you follow me to the common room, George stun me, and then leave. Albus will know magic was used, and he’ll be down here to investigate what was going on. So you must be quick, understood?”

They all nodded and went into the common room. Shacklebolt sat in the pouf chair, and he motioned for the younger children to go first. When they were all safely gone from the room George stunned Kingsley, and him and Fred went into the fireplace to meet up with their friends and siblings, vanishing from eye view. Shacklebolt had been right, not two seconds had passed since George had cast the stunning charm then the twins could hear footsteps near the portrait of the fat lady.

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“Fiddlesticks.” Albus cried as he went into the Gryffindor common room. Finding Kingsley laid stock still on the chair, not moving. He had been stunned and Albus had no clue where the children were. He did not know when he started losing control, but he knew he had. He lifted his wand and then revived the fallen man.

“Thanks Albus I owe you one.” Kingsley said trying to the best of his abilities to avoid making eye contact with the great legilimens.

“What happened Kingsley? Where are the children?”

“Sorry Albus I have no clue. I was sitting here on this chair, and I must have dozed off from exhaustion, and then the next thing I know I’m waking up to find you here reviving me.”

Albus did not believe a word that was coming from the other man's mouth. He knew he was lying, but that was fine by him. Sooner or later the children would return and then so would Harry, and everything would fall into place like it was supposed to.

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The day was getting hotter as James and Harry made their way back to Gringott's. Stomachs stuffed full of ice cream, Harry seemed to be doing better, James noticed. The onlookers did not seem to faze Harry anymore, and James could now relax knowing that Harry was not going to start having a panic attack right there.

“Let’s sit.” Harry said looking at the steps that led to the biggest wizarding bank in the world.

‘You’re turning into a lazy old man.’ James laughed at his son. Harry just rolled his eyes and contentedly looked out of the sea of people, who were milling around, trying to find a sea of red, or bushy brown hair. So far nothing.

Harry was starting to get nervous. He had not seen his friends since the day of the Quidditch game, when he tried to take his life once again. He did not know if they were still mad at him or not. The letter that they sent him seemed friendly enough, but he still was not sure. Letters lie, just like everybody else in his life had, he just hoped that Ginny was the sincerest of them all. He could not wait to see her, smiling her bright smile, her red hair dancing all around her. Almost like the girl that was approaching him.



The supposed girl who had been approaching ran as fast as she could when she saw Harry without his invisibility cloak. She was so happy. "Harry." She cried and she flung her arms around him, and they embraced fully for the first time.

They both stayed like that for several minutes, neither wanting to let the other go. Ginny was crying, Harry could feel the tears on his neck where her head was buried. He soothingly rubbed her back and pushed her body more into his, holding on to her tightly as if she were an anchor.

James watched with a mixture of pride and sadness at this scene. It reminded him so much of him and Lily when they were first starting to date. Not wanting to let the other go, wanting to stay that way for a long time, and not caring who saw their private moments like that. He knew how Harry was feeling at this moment, and he could not feel any happier. He knew that Harry was finally whole.

"I've missed you Harry." Ginny whispered, looking down, her face flushed with embarrassment.

"I've missed you to." Harry grinned at her.

"Hey mate." Ron said as the rest of the group finally made their way towards the wayward young man and his father. Getting the hello's out of the way Ron finally asked the question that was on everybody's mind, "What are you doing out here? Where's your invisibility cloak?"

"Don't need it. Apparently the ministry called everything off, and we're free." Harry laughed, he took hold of Ginny's hand and he started heading towards the Apothecary.

They all followed them James two steps behind his son, his boy. No his man, today Harry had finally showed his father that he was an adult

They all entered into the picture postcard store. Newt eyes, bat wings, lizard gizzards all stocked the shelves. The teens all hurried and gathered all of their supplies as quickly as they could. Beautiful the store was on the outside it was not the same on the inside. They paid

for their purchases and left. Harry taking his and Ginny's packages, and Ron taking Hermione's.

The next stop was Ollivanders for a new wand for Harry. They must have been there for over an hour at the most when Ollivander finally found one that matched with Harry's essence. An almost exact replica of Harry's other; with the minor detail that instead of having one of Fawkes feather, the magical wand's core held one of another of a phoenix. Harry threw away James' old wand, much to James' wishes, apparently it had just been a spare one of Severus' father, and had no use or sentimental value towards it, James paid for Harry's new wand and they left.

As they stepped outside Fred and George said their goodbyes to everybody explaining how they had to go back to Weasley's Wizard Wheezes. The remaining ones went to Flourish and Blott's for their books.

James hung back as the quiet observer. Harry and his friends laughing and having a good time brought back so many old memories of him and his friends. Now most of them were gone and he had no body left, and soon Harry would be leaving him to start his own life with Ginny, he knew she was going to be a keeper, and soon the only person he would have left was Remus, but even Remus seemed to be not wanting James' friendship anymore. He heaved a sad sigh; he could not understand what he did to deserve this.

"Dad." A tentative voice broke him out of his reverie.

"Thanks a lot." Harry smiled at his father.

"You're welcome Harry."

"No, thanks for everything. I love you Dad."

"I love you to son." James said. He gathered Harry in a hug and then gave him a push towards his friends.

Once more Harry was laded down with his and Ginny's purchases and so was Ron (With Hermione's).

"I'm telling you mate, once they got you hooked they never let their claws out of you." Ron grumbled under all the weight.

Harry laughed at his friend. "Cheers." Harry said, but then recoiled when he saw the looks that the girls were giving him.

The girls huffed and pushed passed the boys, making it a point to knock into their arms as they passed, noses high in the air.

"A word of advice." James broke in. "Never say that when they can overhear you. I wish you both the best of luck when this part of the day is over." James chuckled.

"We've got to make it up to them." Ron said, eyes roaming the street where the girls were fuming waiting for their 'boys' to hurry up.

When they finally did catch up they gave the girls a look of apology. Ron looked so crestfallen that Hermione forgave him right away. Ginny and Harry's relationship being new, took a little bit of persuasion and a promise to let her choose where they go on their first Hogsmeade weekend together, for Ginny to finally wrap her arms in his.

"Where to next?" James asked jovially. "It looks like you're all done with the shopping. Home?"

"Dad you promised."

"What did I promise?"

"The Magical Menagerie."

"Oh so right you are, how could I forget?" James smiled, a twinkle in his eyes.

"Dad..." Harry rolled his eyes at his father and they all headed towards the pet shop that was just up the street.

"What are you going to get?" Ginny asked.



As the day was passing, so was the crowd. By mid afternoon Diagon Alley was wearing thin with wizards and witches going home, away from the threat that night can bring. He could make his move now, the streets were deserted.

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James tried fighting the person that held him in his grasp. He could make out the soft linger of a musky scent on the person who he was able to identify as a male. He felt a strong hand holding tightly on his shoulders and a wand poking him in his side. That did not frighten him one bit, he was more concerned of the startled and horrified looks the children were giving him.

“Drop your wands.” The man growled and then James knew whom that voice belonged to.

“Great Joke Remus, now you can let me go.”

“Shut up, Potter.” Remus growled again, shaking the man hard. “I said drop your wand.”

James stumbled forwards a bit, and dropped his wand; he was in no position to fight the man he used to call a friend.

"Dad!" Harry cried.

“Just get out of here, Harry, go with the others, I’ll be fine.” James wanted to reassure Harry that he was going to be fine. When he saw that Harry was not moving he yelled, “Go!”

Harry jumped back and was ready to high tail it out of there and call for help when he was stopped.

“Harry, why are you running? Aren’t you going to help your dad? He’s helped you, he’s even sacrificing his life for yours, just like your poor mother did, shame she’s dead and you’re still here.”

James again tried wriggling himself free from Lupin, but he could not slip out of the man's grasp.

Harry reached inside the box marked Ollivanders and pulled out his new wand. "Let him go."

"You stupid foolish boy, don't you know that will not happen, now drop your wands like good little kiddies, and come here boy." Remus' lips curled as he said that addressing it to all the children around him.

"Stupi..." Harry's spell was cut short, when Remus interceded. Harry felt his wand fly out of his grasp, as did all the others who were sporting theirs. Around his feet Remus stood amid the wands.

"Friori." He said and all of the wands erupted in smoke.

"All I want are the Potters and the rest of you can go. No harm done now is there. Come here Harry like a good little lad."

"And the others can go." Harry said trying to sound bigger than he was, trying to make up for the lack of a wand that he had.

"I promise the others can go."

Harry made a step forwards wanting this all to be over with.

"Harry, don't move anymore."

"Crucio." Remus yelled, and James felt his body shaking and convulsing the pain was absolute torment.

Harry started running closer, and as soon as he was close enough for Remus' liking, Remus lifted the curse off of James.

James lay in a shuddering heap on the cobbled stone path. He was hurting, but his mere thought was on Harry, and how Harry was in so much danger than before. He lifted his eyes and saw his son falling to the ground with a petrificus totalus to his chest.

"No!" James yelled. "Remus stop this. This isn't you, you know deep down inside you don't want this to happen. Listen to your heart Remus. Leave the boy. Please. He has done nothing to you, except believe in you, and loved you as if you were his father."

“Shut up Potter. I’ve had enough of your lip.” Remus seethed.

While all this was going on, Ginny slipped passed Hermione and Ron and quietly made her way to Harry's fallen body. She made a move and was able to lift half his body; she started dragging him away very slowly to safety.

James noticed Ginny and his eyes quickly became wide with relief that Harry was going to be safe. He quickly averted his gaze to one of the stores, lest Remus finds out what he was looking at.

Remus noticed the change in Potter's facial expression, he cast the same charm he used on Harry on James, and he became as still as a statue. Then he narrowed his gaze on the young girl who had foolishly decided to play the hero.

“Avada Kadavra.”

A blast of green showered the young girl and she fell limply to the floor, a surprise look on her face as her breathing stopped and her head fell to the side on the pavement next to Harry's.

Ron being too slow rushed to his fallen sister, Hermione ran to get Fred and George, whose store was only a few feet away. Tears running down both their eyes.

Remus in the meantime grabbed Harry's body, which was merely a few feet away, and then touched James' and the three disappeared without a trace.

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They landed in a dark room, not knowing where.

“Very well done, Lupin. My master will congratulate you later.” The aristocratic voice rang out. “Shall we revive them, it would be so much more fun. Don’t you think?”

“Of course.” Remus replied huskily. “Finite Incantantum.”

Harry being the first to come around cried at the top of his lungs. He curled into a ball, not caring what happened to him anymore. The one person who should not have died did, and he could not take it anymore. "Ginny!" He yelled over and over again.

James also coming to, tried his way to get over to his son. This was not the time for Harry to start breaking down. He wanted to go and comfort him, but then try to get out as soon as possible, he did not care what happened to himself, he only cared about what happened to his beautiful child, Lily's child.

Remus interceded James as he was making his way closer to the boy. He lifted him up and with a solid throw, James went splattering into the wall on the other side of the small room.

"The party should be getting started soon. Only two more people are supposedly showing up tonight. Too bad it would have been fun for all to watch the 'Saviour' fall." Lucius smirked.

"You won't get away with this Malfoy." James said weakly from his place on the floor.

"I think I already have." Lucius smirked. "And since I have no use of you anymore Lupin, I'll give you the honour of saying your last goodbye to your friend. Finite Incantantum."

Remus had no idea where he was and why he was there. He looked around his surroundings, and saw James and Harry looking the worst for wears. Memories of the past few days came flooding into his memories. What he did and how he killed the youngest and only girl of the Weasley family. "Sweet Merlin." Remus cried. "What did I do?" Tears running down his face. He rocked back and forth. "Merlin, please forgive me. I didn't know, I didn't know. Please forgive me."

James took pity on his friend, he knew that it was not Remus' fault; he was under the imperious curse. He could not help what happened. He took his friend in his arms and cradled him there. "It's alright Moony. You're forgiven." James hushed in a voice full of reassurance and understanding.

"I've killed the girl, Prongs. Harry, you. I didn't know, I didn't know."



"I know Moony. And it's ok; it's not your fault. You're still Moony, the best friend I ever had. You are still family." James continued holding onto his broken friend.

Lucius watched the scene and sneered. He thought he was going to be sick. He watched the boy in the corner huddled as far as he could get away from them. Silver met Emerald and a smirk came across the older Malfoy's face. Holding something in his outstretched arms, neither of the other men noticed the silver haired man approach.

Remus tensed as soon as he felt the silver sword run through his back. James tensed as soon as he saw blood spilling forth from his friend. Remus' wand dropped from his hands and rolled into the corner by Harry's feet. Minutes later Moony was dead.

"REMUS!" Harry cried.

Lucius not caring what the others did until the two other guests arrived left to sit and watch the show.

James ran to his son, Harry having gone into shock, his body convulsing. James held tightly to Harry's prone body.

"Shhh.... Harry, Remus is in a better place now. It's all right Lil Prongs. It's all right. I'm still here; no harm is going to come to us. Don't worry." James soothed his son. He rubbed his back running smooth circles to calm him. "I Love you forever, I'll like you for always, as long as I'm living my baby you'll be." Over and over again he kept this up. And soon Harry's body started to relax.

"Get rid of the spare." A hollow voice broke through the calmness that was in the room.

Harry's scar began to burn; he knew Voldemort was there, waiting. He heard those words before. "Dad." Harry started imploringly. "You have to go."

"For the last time there is nowhere to go." Lucius spat. "Welcome my Lord, My beautiful Narcissa."

"You brat will die tonight. Just like my Draco." Narcissa laughed manically.

Harry choose to ignore this, he needed to keep his head clear from all thoughts except for the safety of his small family.

"Narcissa I give you this gift, the gift for the loss of your son." Voldemort said approvingly to the woman by his side.

"Thank you, my Lord." She whispered. With her wand held high the room exploded in a shower of green, and one body fell onto the floor.